Bad Bad Things

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Bad Bad Things

by ajj

Summary

Will Graham, a struggling drug and alcohol addict, nearly dies from a cocaine overdose. He survives, barely, and is placed into therapy with Hannibal Lecter in hopes of paving the way to his recovery.

Hannibal isn't interested in ridding Will of his addiction, especially not once he is made aware of the kinds of things Will can be persuaded to do when under the influence.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1

The first two times it happens, Will Graham doesn’t mean to overdose. When he’s twenty-one years old, he’s new to drugs and naïve and hanging with all of the wrong people, and he takes too much too quickly and passes out. He wakes up hours later to find that the others moved him to a bedroom in the back of the house. He thinks he should be angry, but he’s not dead, so he swears to himself that it won’t happen again.

It does happen again when he’s twenty-four and his dad dies. Will doesn’t know how to cope with such an event without pumping himself full of chemicals, so that’s what he does; maybe it’s too much for his body or maybe it’s his emotional state or maybe it’s both, but he feels himself almost die that night and makes a pact for the second time to not let it happen again. He doesn’t want to die, not yet, not like that.

The third time, he wakes up in the hospital, unsure of how or when he got there, because all he remembers from the night prior is making his way into some club he'd never been to before and taking the first thing a stranger offered him.

Yeah, maybe this time it hadn't been an accident; whatever the case might have been, the moment Will's eyes peel open to remind him that he's still alive, he wishes that he wasn't.

"You're awake," the first doctor that strolls through his door says, and Will can tell by his tone and his expression that the man is surprised Will even survived the night. The doctor feigns flipping through Will's paperwork before refocusing on the patient. "How are you feeling, Mr. Graham?"

What a loaded question. "Fine," Will responds, because he's not sure what the correct response would be. He wants to be snarky with the man, but he's too exhausted to care. Hospital beds aren't comfy, and he's still got a tube in his arm, but he's ready to fall asleep.

The doctor doesn't dance around the truth. "You are lucky to be alive," he says, his tone reflecting his earlier expression of surprise. The doctor's smile seems so forced and rehearsed that Will has to grimace.

Am I really? I wouldn't have to be listening to your dumb ass talk if I were dead, Will wants to say, but thinks better of it. He isn't looking to be put on suicide watch.

"Yeah," is all he can think to say in response. He pauses when he realizes that he doesn't remember why exactly he's there. Overdose, clearly, he's been there and done that, but on what? He can't remember any of last night's events. "What did I OD on?"

More scanning of Will's paperwork. "A little bit of everything, looks like," he says. "Cocaine, mostly. Traces of alcohol and prescription pills, but the cocaine is what did it." Cocaine, of course. Will knows it's a problem he has, and he's less than thrilled at the prospect of the doctor preaching to him about quitting, because if he could he would. He opens his mouth, but the doctor speaks first.

"Which brings me to my next question." The words come out slower this time, rather than hastily, like the rest of the man's sentences. "Forgive me, but it's necessary for me to ask. Was it a suicide attempt?"

Well, he doubts it was an accident. "No," he half-lies, because he isn't sure what his thought process was at the time.

The doctor gives him a half-smile, as if he doesn't really believe him but isn't interested in pursuing the topic any further. "Glad to hear it."

"Can I go now?" He's restless; he's been through this dozens of times. There's nothing more they can do for him. He's alive, and if he wants to stay that way, he'll have to do the rest himself. He knows he won't.

He's taken by surprise when the doctor shakes his head. "Not quite. This isn't the first time you've been brought here for an addiction. We want to take steps to make sure it's the last time."

Will doesn't like where the doctor seems to be going. What now? Court? Rehab? He's done these things before. Painful? Yes. An annoyance? Yes. Helpful in the long run? No.

"We're going to set you up with a therapist, Mr. Graham."

He's never heard that one before. He can't help but laugh in disbelief. *"What?"*

"Cognitive behavioral therapy can be helpful in fighting addictions," the doctor explains, and Will is already not listening to him. "Do you already have support of some kind? Family, friends?"

No. "Yes," he lies. He doesn't know why he cares what the doctor would think if he said no. The doctor might not even think anything. Maybe Will just doesn't want to see that flicker of pity in his eyes that he knows he can't avoid.

The doctor smiles instead and Will can't read the underlying emotion, but if he had to guess, he would imagine it to be relief. "Therapy shouldn't be too hard, then. It's just to give you the extra push."

"I assume that saying 'no' isn't an option."

"Afraid not." The doctor is smiling as if they've just shared a joke as he scribbles onto something. He pushes the something into Will's hands. A business card.

"We've already contacted him and set up an appointment for you. Dr. Hannibal Lecter is his name. He is..." The man seems to flounder for a word, and Will knows that can't be good. "Unique," he finishes.

Unique. Fantastic. Even his name makes Will cringe.

"What if I don't go?"

A sad smile. There it is, there's the pity Will has been waiting for. He's learned to expect it from doctors. They look at him like a charity case—the poor, sad addict that they know will be pronounced dead at their hospital sooner or later. The doctor knows it could be him pulling the white sheet over Will's head. They look at him like a dying man, as if he were there for terminal cancer instead of an overdose.

Maybe they're right, but he could do without the reminder of his dwindling time.

"We would really prefer if you did it without us forcing you." A threat. A threat of what, he doesn't know; maybe more fines he can't pay, or jail time that he knows won't make a difference. "Dr. Lecter is very good at what he does. I think you would find him helpful."

Will very much doubts it, but he forces a smile and a nod if it means getting out of the hospital sooner. He's been to Narcotics Anonymous, people have held interventions, he's spent time in rehab—he's done just about anything he could think of. It hasn't helped. There's not a light in his life that can persuade him to change. His life isn't worth saving, and that isn't something therapy can fix.

It occurs to him once he's discharged that doesn't know who to call. He's kept the few friends he has under the assumption that he's clean, and he doesn't think he can handle seeing pity and disappointment in anyone else's expression anytime soon. The only family that didn't disown him were the ones that died before they had a chance or before he gave them a reason to. He doesn't have a dollar to his name to call a cab.

Carefully, he considers his options. He *can* walk home, if that's what it comes to. Or he can stroll into the bar he can see down the street and throw his whole three hours of sobriety down the drain. Or he can walk into the freeway as a semi is driving by.

He mulls over the final option before deciding that, no, today's not the day for that; he supposes he'll know it when it comes. As for the bar—his financial situation might prove to be an obstacle in that case.

The only thing left to do is walk to his home that isn't a home and bide his time until his appointment.

He knows it's going to be a long week when he can't help but think, *I'm too sober for this.*

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will has never been a 'people person.' In fact, he can trace his overwhelmingly bad social skills back to when he was in high school and started stealing his dad's whiskey to present things in class without panicking. When he's sober, he is awkward and anxious and generally not sociable. The years of addiction probably haven't done any good for his social skills, but he can't remember a time when he had any at all.

These things help Will to justify pouring a shot for himself before he leaves for therapy. He won't be totally drunk, not enough for the doctor to smell it on him or really suspect anything. A little alcohol never killed anyone, he thinks, ignores the fault in the statement, and downs the shot without a second thought.

At any rate, he realizes he's clearly not drunk enough when he steps into the office building and realizes just how nice it is.

Will is a simple man. Growing up in a poor Southern community makes one more inclined to take the bare minimum and make the best of it; Will is no exception. Mediocrity is his luxury. He does not feel right here, with the fancy-looking waiting room and the dressed up receptionist and the classical music echoing through the decorated hallways. He wonders how he’s even going to pay for this.

The receptionist stares him down through her thick-rimmed glasses with a look of disbelief when he tells her who he’s waiting for. He can practically hear her thoughts: *“Really? You, with Dr. Lecter?”* He doesn’t blame her. He’s unshaven, his hair is unkempt, and he didn’t think to dress for quite as high a standard as the building’s architecture is setting. There’s no one else in the waiting room, and he’s somewhat grateful, so maybe he doesn’t entirely seem like a drunken homeless person that wandered into a random place—though an assumption like that would be half true.

Will read up on Dr. Lecter's practice before the day of the actual therapy came, and he isn't sure what to make of the things he's read. Several people have described the man as standoffish, peculiar, *unique,* just as the doctor had said. None of them used the word 'cold' in the reviews, but Will could tell they were teetering dangerously close to it.

On the other side of things, Dr. Lecter seemed to be highly revered in his field. Upon Googling his name, Will found dozens of peer-reviewed papers written by the man, none of which he really bothered to sift through, knowing he wouldn't understand them anyway. He is talented, Will can tell. He isn't Will's type of person, though, not that he can tell by the descriptions and pictures he's seen. Much too professional, too serious. All things beneficial in his field, but not traits Will particularly enjoys in someone.

If nothing else, the doctor is good at what he does, that much he can tell.

Will isn't one for positive thinking, though, and maybe when Dr. Lecter calls him back, he's already more than a little biased.

"It's nice to meet you, Will," the doctor says ever so politely once they're back in his office, which is even grander than the rest of the building. He puts his hand out and Will blinks for a second before it registers to him that he is offering a handshake. He's sweating and not big on physical contact, but thinks better of behaving rudely; after all, he has to see this guy for the next few months, and it won't do any good if they hate each other. The man's grip is firm and confident, much unlike Will's, who can't remember the last time he's formally shaken someone's hand before. These kinds of things aren't in his nature.

Will sits on one of the leather chairs set up in the office and watches as the doctor sinks into the one across from him, a little too close for Will's liking. Will isn't sure what to do—to smile, introduce himself, or stay quiet. He decides on the latter; silence has never hurt anyone.

"If it is acceptable, I would like to get to know you more before we proceed." The doctor eyes Will expectantly, waiting for his permission that he doesn't really have a choice in giving.

"Okay."

"Good. How old are you, Will?"

"Twenty-eight." The number sounds ancient to Will's ears. He wonders where the time went.

"Do you have a job?"

"No."

The doctor scribbles something down; Will cringes.

"Tell me about yourself."

Will blinks in surprise. A snippy *wouldn't you like to know?* lingers on the tip of his tongue. The doctor seems to notice his discomfort and casts a smile in Will's direction; just barely, Will glimpses a flash of perfectly white teeth, noting how sharp they looked even from a distance. "We'll come back to that," he says, and Will visibly relaxes.

"You are not fond of eye contact." It's not a question.

"No."

"Not very talkative, either?" Dr. Lecter asks lightly.

Will ponders over what the consequences of answering with one word would be, and decides that he's too curious to *not* do it. "No."

The man tilts his head, looking intrigued. "We'll move on, then. Can you tell me why you're here today?" Will notices the man's accent for the first time. He's not good with accents, but

it's certainly not American. He's not good at social cues either, but he imagines that it's probably too early in their sessions to ask. Frankly, he's appalled with himself to find that he even cares.

"Because—" Will starts and stops as quickly as he began. There isn't a way to answer that without lying or being rude. He swallows. "I was forced into it, to be honest."

"By whom? Family, friends?"

"No. The, uh, the hospital." He feels funny saying it and shifts uncomfortably.

Dr. Lecter raises his eyebrows in surprise. "They do not do that often. Not unless they believe the problem to be quite severe, at least in my experience," he says, and Will is both surprised and relieved to find that there is not a hint of pity in the man's voice. "I was told that you are here for a drug addiction. What drug, Will?"

There are lots, some of which he doesn't even know the real name of. "Cocaine," he says simply, hoping the answer will be enough.

The doctor gazes at him expectantly, waiting for elaboration. Will sighs in defeat, feeling compelled to tell the truth under his hard but somehow not intimidating stare.

"Prescription pills. Alcohol. I used to do heroin, but not anymore."

"What helped you to quit heroin?"

Will doesn't like the answer, and he knows Dr. Lecter won't either. "It got too expensive." The ugly truth—Will has never quit any addiction on his own accord.

If there is judgement by the doctor, which Will knows there undoubtedly is, he doesn't show it. "It is as good a reason as any," he offers.

Will has to fight back the scoff building in his throat. He doesn’t think he can respond without sounding dismissive.

“Do you think you have a problem, Will?”

It’s a difficult question to answer. Answering ‘no’ would be an obvious lie, and somehow Will doubts the doctor will take kindly to denial. Answering ‘yes’ is—well, it’s humiliating, at least in Will’s experience, and while he’s been told to not look at it as such, he can’t help but view his addiction as glaring evidence of something that went wrong inside him, some broken thing that separates him from everyone else but not in a good way. It makes him feel weak and small. There isn’t a right answer, not really.

He settles on an answer in the middle. “I wouldn’t be here if I didn’t,” he says casually, avoiding the one word answer he knows the doctor is looking for.

“Recognizing the problem is step one. Do you know what step two is?” His tone is polite, of course it is, but Will takes it as anything but. *Of course I don’t, you asshole, I wouldn’t have a problem if I did. This is your job, not mine.* The man is getting under Will’s skin, and he can’t

quite tell why. He's been a model doctor, and Will can't deny that. Maybe it's his inability to open up to people, or maybe it's the residual bitterness over never making it past step fucking one; whatever it is, Will clenches his jaw as discreetly as he can in irritation.

"No. I don't."

As if sensing Will's annoyance, the doctor's tone shifts ever so slightly to make it gentler this time. "Step two is finding the root of the problem."

Will tenses as his mind registers the words. "Okay," he says slowly. His eyes make it as far as Dr. Lecter's chest; he still can't meet his eyes.

"Do you know what the root of your problem is?"

He does. He very much does. He wishes he didn't; he wishes he could be one of the few people that don't have a reason, an excuse.

"No." An obvious lie. He doesn't try to hide it—the memories entering his mind as unwelcome guests override the things he says. Memories of his father offering fifteen-year-old Will some of what he called 'angel dust' and Will not knowing better than to take it in hopes of pleasing his dad. Memories of his mother shattering an empty beer bottle over the back of his neck, then drinking one himself to numb the pain, having not gotten medical attention. His hand reaches up subconsciously to touch the scar, covered by the thick locks of hair. "Yes," he amends, then wishes he hadn't, because now Dr. Lecter will expect him to talk about it and he can't. He can't.

"Will," the doctor says. Will is staring past him, and his eyes dart to the man's face in hopes of making eye contact, but he can't do that either. "Are you alright?"

"I—" The word 'no' thunders in his mind, because he's not. He hasn't thought about any of this in so long, and he feels like he's drowning in it now. His expression is haunted and distant.

"You don't have to talk about it." Will's eyes snap back up to the doctor's face; they dart from his chin to his cheeks to his lips, but never make it to his eyes. "My job is not to force you outside of your comfort zone. My job is to expand your comfort zone over time."

"Thank you," Will says, not really hearing his own voice.

"No need." The doctor begins to initiate a different topic of conversation, and Will guesses he understands, because he finds himself uttering mechanical responses when they're due. His mind doesn't absorb any of what they're talking about, too preoccupied with tormenting him with memories he's worked so hard to forget, even if it meant destroying himself in the process.

Before he knows it, the doctor is standing, and it takes Will a moment to realize that it means their time is up. He stands on his own feet shakily.

The doctor shakes Will's hand for a second time, his grip no less firm than the first time and Will's no more confident. "I think we will work fine together," Dr. Lecter says, and Will agrees for some unknown reason. "Do you wish to continue sessions with me?"

"Yes," he finds himself saying, surprising himself with the conviction in his tone.

"Good." Dr. Lecter smiles handsomely, and he slides Will a card with another time and date written on it in dark blue ink. "I look forward to seeing you."

Will can only nod before he turns stiffly to leave. There are too many emotions rushing around inside of him, and he doesn't care to identify them.

"Oh, and one last thing, Will," the doctor calls just as Will reaches the door. Will turns to him, furrowing his brow in confusion.

"Try to avoid the alcohol before our next visit, yes?"

Will's cheeks light up in embarrassment at the comment. He doesn't say it rudely, but it isn't a mere suggestion either. He doesn't know how to feel about the fact that the man was somehow able to smell it on him; he's sure he wasn't drunk enough to act tipsy.

"Right. Yes," he says, because he doesn't know what else to say. He walks as briskly as he can without making his discomfort obvious before he can feel too guilty about being caught drunk at a rehabilitation session.

Then again, maybe it's not such a bad thing that he's already setting the bar of expectation low for Dr. Lecter. Will feels a twinge of something unpleasant in his gut at the thought of disappointing him through failure, but the idea of succeeding in letting go of his addictions is so foreign to him that he doesn't see it in being within the realm of possible.

The man might be a good doctor and a good therapist, but he isn't a cure-all. Will knows better than to fool himself into believing he can change.

Chapter End Notes

can you tell that I Love the idea of a tortured and twitchy will graham.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Over the coming months, Will is shocked to find that not only does he not mind going to therapy, he's actually beginning to look forward to it.

The first few times are rough, yes; Dr. Lecter is big on psychoanalysis. Will is not, but the doctor insists that it is necessary to a certain degree to ensure recovery. Will still isn't exactly sure if recovery is truly the road he is pursuing, but he humors the man nonetheless. It doesn't help, not to Will—big surprise—but he feels proud of himself for even allowing himself to go that far, and he takes the emotion as one would take water after wandering in a desert for days without it.

Will is also still not keen on discussing his past with the doctor; the past is locked away in his mind in the form of memories, having never been said out loud in real words. He isn't sure how to do that just yet. Dr. Lecter is amazingly patient with him and never pushes for anything, not even when Will convinces him to let up on a little bit of his own past.

So far, Will knows that the doctor hails from Lithuania, is thirty-eight, and was a surgeon before switching his practice to psychiatry. He also has a passion for the culinary arts, and when he mentions it, Will is immediately made aware of the direct shift between him. They are almost exact opposites, quite like day and night. Will can't cook to save his life and failed out of college; Dr. Lecter hosts regular dinner parties and is, as Will already suspected, widely respected as a doctor, even though Will thinks he's a bit too humble about it. Will has his perks, too—the doctor can't hunt or build the way he can. Will also doubts he knows how to mix drinks like he can, but it doesn't seem like an appropriate detail to mention.

Maybe they're dancing around the important details a bit, because after all, knowing all about Will's handyman skills or Dr. Lecter's heritage isn't helping either one of them to work towards a goal. But Will takes things as they come, just as he always has, and although Will doubts he means anything more than a patient to Dr. Lecter, he can't help but think of the man as a friend.

Such things swirl around in Will's mind incessantly as he sits in his jail cell and ponders over who to call.

His predicament is Jimmy and Brian's fault, really. He knows the doctor has stressed repeatedly that it won't do to go blaming others for one's mistakes, especially in the case of an addiction, but he doesn't see who else's fault this could be. It isn't his, surely. It wasn't his idea to go bar hopping. He wasn't the one that had spiked his own drink. And they'd dared him to urinate on that cop car without knowing that there was someone in it. Not his fault. His mind is far too clouded to rationalize the situation in any other way.

He isn't sure the doctor will see things the same way, but he has no one else to call. He doesn't know where Jimmy and Brian are; if they're lucky, they're home, and if not, they're

somewhere in this jail with him. Alana and Frederick each live an hour away, and they're busy actually *doing* things with themselves. They can't afford to be woken up. He hears the doctor's words in his mind, spoken during their third or fourth meeting. *If you need anything, Will, call me.*

Will knows he probably meant for him to call if he was having a particularly hard time with avoiding temptation, not after he's already given in to it. But now is as good a time as any, Will thinks as he dials the number.

The doctor answers on the third ring, and judging by his voice, he's tired. Will doesn't know the time, but the voice on the other end gives him enough to realize that, yes, it's probably very late and quite past the window of acceptable hours to call a therapist.

It occurs to Will that he doesn't know what exactly to say. They're not friends, no matter what kind of fantasy Will's head has dreamt up. They're hardly acquaintances; they know each other in a professional setting and nothing more.

The man on the other end speaks again, and Will knows he's got to say something, anything. "Hi, Dr. Lecter." His voice sounds surprisingly steady in comparison to how he feels.

"Will?" There's a hint of surprise in his tone and Will feels a twinge of guilt in his gut. "Is everything alright? It's late."

"I know, I'm sorry. What time is it?"

"It's 2:31." Horror mixes in with the guilt already pooling in his stomach; he shouldn't have called, he shouldn't have gotten himself into this situation. He contemplates hanging up the phone, but it's too late to do that now—if he does, he'll just have to talk about it in therapy another time. Somehow, he feels like that would make it even worse.

Can a doctor choose to leave a patient? He doesn't know, and he doesn't want to find out.

"Do you mind telling me why you're calling so late?"

"I'm in a predicament, doctor."

"Is that so?" There's shuffling on the other end. He's getting up, Will realizes. "What's your predicament?"

"I'm in jail." The words tumble out of his mouth too quickly for his liking. He never has a filter when he's drunk, but he wishes he would have phrased it better.

"I see." The voice on the other end is surprisingly calm, all things considered. "Why?"

"Public intoxication."

There's a sigh on the other end. It's a disappointed sigh, but it's not a surprised one, and Will grimaces at that. "Will."

“I know. Christ, I know.” He runs a hand through his hair, desperately trying to calm his nerves. “I didn’t know who else to call. My options are...” He forces a laugh, and it comes out strangled and pained, giving away far too much for his liking. “Limited,” he finishes, which is an understatement.

“Should I feel flattered or cursed?” The doctor asks dryly. “Don’t answer that. What jail is it?”

It's Will’s turn to wonder whether he’s flattered or cursed at the idea that the man is actually considering bailing him out. “It’s the BCCC.”

“I will be there shortly.”

“Listen, you don’t—“ Will trips over his own words; Dr. Lecter doesn’t even sound annoyed, just tired and understandably disappointed at the step backward. Will suddenly feels terrible at the prospect of dragging him out of bed in the middle of the night all because he has no self-control. He’s changed his mind—the doctor bailing him out is far worse than jail time. “You don’t have to. I've spent the night in jail before.”

“You called me for a reason, didn’t you? You must not want to spend the night in prison.”

Of course he doesn’t *want* to, but is this really about what he wants? He doesn’t deserve to get what he wants right now. “It seems inappropriate to ask this of you.” It’s true—he didn’t take much time to actually consider what he was doing before he called, but the shame is setting in now.

“I am already up, Will, and I would rather not have one of my patients rot the night away in a jail cell.” Will finds himself drinking in the man’s accent, thickened by sleep. It’s never sounded so prominent before; Will has grown accustomed to it and normally doesn’t take notice, but tonight it’s quite pronounced.

“Thanks.” He doesn't know what else to say. There will surely be more to be said when he’s actually out of jail.

“I will be there shortly,” he repeats, and Will hears the click of the phone being hung up.

Despite himself, Will almost dozes off in the fifteen minutes it takes Dr. Lecter to arrive at the jail. He is jolted awake when he hears the grating sound of the doors being pried open.

His eyes fall upon the doctor, standing close behind the officer holding the keys. He’s dressed nicely, of course he is; the only thing about him that isn’t as posh and formal as usual is his hair, which isn’t held by any product. It hangs slightly down into his forehead, but otherwise, there’s not a hair out of place. Will can’t help but admire the look anyway.

He can’t read the doctor’s expression. Maybe that’s a good thing.

Will is processed and released easily. His doctor’s feelings regarding him at the moment might be a mystery, but the cops’ sure aren’t. They stare down at him with such a look of disgust that one might think Will was imprisoned for rape, not drunk and disorderly conduct.

It doesn't help when he has to lean on Dr. Lecter as they shamble out of the prison because he can't balance himself properly. He can feel the eyes of everyone in the vicinity boring into the back of his neck, no doubt watching him and shaking their heads as they do.

The doctor allows him silence for the first couple minutes of the car ride before he speaks, his voice low and careful, much like the way it sounds during their sessions. Will isn't sure what to make of that. "Your bail cost me $500."

It's not said with malice. It's merely stating a fact. Either way, the guilt already weighing heavily on his mind becomes worse. "I'm sorry. I'll pay you back," he says quietly, which is, as they both know, a lie. It's not a lie by choice, but it is a lie. He doesn't have $500 to give, and he won't anytime soon unless he hits the lottery or something else equally impossible. "Eventually," he amends, which isn't much better.

"I don't expect you to pay me back. I am not concerned about the money. It's the point, Will."

He doesn't know what the point is. He's wouldn't consider himself smart on a good day, and he's definitely not smart enough for word games when he's drunk. The doctor must realize this, because he continues.

"Had you not been imprisoned, you wouldn't be worrying about something as trivial as repaying a debt. This was easily preventable. Do you see how addiction has a domino effect?"

"I'm sorry. It wasn't my idea, really, it wasn't. My friends—"

Dr. Lecter interrupts him. "We have talked about the effects of blaming others."

"But—" Will starts. He isn't sure what argument he could even make for himself, because he knows the doctor is right. He doesn't want to admit that.

"Will." He sounds tired, and Will knows he doesn't want to have to explain why his friends aren't the ones at fault. Again.

"Hannibal," Will says, and covers his mouth with his hand when he realizes what he said. The man's first name has never made its way into Will's thoughts before; he doesn't know why he said it, but part of him likes the way it felt rolling off his tongue. He's feeling bold tonight. It's the alcohol that speaks next, but he doesn't try to stop himself. "I'm sorry. Can I call you that? Is that okay? I like that name."

The doctor glances over at him. "Seeing as we're not in a professional setting, I don't see the harm."

"Hannibal," Will says again. He makes a sound somewhere between a snort and a hiccup. "Rhymes with *cannibal."*

Dr. Lecter—Hannibal, Will thinks, forcing the smile off his face—doesn't take his eyes off the road. He doesn't laugh; he's probably heard Will's joke before. "Yes, it does. Where do

you live?" he asks before Will can say anything else.

Will swallows. It was another thing he hadn't considered before making the phone call. "My housing situation is a little…" He hesitates, avoiding the last bit of the sentence. "It's, uh, complicated."

"How so?" Hannibal asks, pursing his lips. His voice is calm. If Will had to guess, he would say that the man is feeling anything but calm on the inside.

"I'm homeless."

Hannibal casts a look of mutual surprise and horror in Will's direction. "Did it never occur to you to mention that during our sessions?"

"I mean, I haven't—I wasn't always homeless. When we started, I wasn't. I got evicted two weeks ago." He thinks it was two weeks ago. It could be more, it could be less. His concept of time is practically nonexistent. "My fault, really. I'm not punctual when it comes to rent."

Hannibal seems to ponder over the situation. "What am I going to do with you, then?"

"You can drop me off on the side of the road somewhere." The words sound comical, but they aren't meant as a joke. Will's situation is anything but humorous, and they both know, at least on a subconscious level, that leaving Will outside in this state has about a 50/50 chance of ending in death or some horrific injury.

"I am not doing that." The man at the wheel sounds exasperated. Will thinks that maybe jail wasn't such a bad thing after all. It meant free shelter and food, neither of which he has outside of prison. "A hotel, then? Can you stay at a hotel?"

"I don't have money," Will says pointedly, as if he were stating the obvious.

"I will pay."

"No, you won't. I've cost you enough to last a lifetime."

"Will, please." He knows that the cost probably won't make a dent in Hannibal's salary, but he doesn't think he can handle charging this man any more money.

"I would rather spend the night in a snowbank than have you spend more money on me."

Hannibal is pursing his lips again. "The only other thing I can suggest is for you to come home with me, and I do not want to make you uncomfortable with that suggestion."

Will isn't uncomfortable. In fact, he's quite the opposite. He's flattered, and he's thankful for the darkness of the roads, because he can feel his cheeks heating up for some unknown reason—after all, the suggestion is completely benign. He blames the alcohol. "I'm not uncomfortable. I wouldn't want to be an inconvenience, though."

"You would not be an inconvenience." Hannibal's tone relaxes Will. "I can offer you a place at my home until you find one of your own."

“That’s…very kind of you.” He almost wants to refuse. It’s *too* kind, far more than what he deserves. But he can’t refuse, not unless he feels like roughing it on the streets for a few more weeks. Maybe months. He hopes it won’t be months.

Hannibal just nods. Nothing else is said for the duration of the car ride, mostly because Will falls asleep before further conversation can be made. He’s shaken awake gently when they arrive, and in the seconds after he sees the house for the first time, he thinks he’s still dreaming.

Will has been poor for the entirety of his life. He’s never so much as seen the exterior of a house as grand as Hannibal’s, let alone stepped inside one. “This is—? This is your house?” He can’t keep the surprise out of his voice. He knew Hannibal was wealthy, he had to be, but this is something else.

“Surprised?” Hannibal asks. His lips are turned slightly upwards in the hint of a smile.

“I’ve never lived outside of the slums, Hannibal.” There’s a pause. “Can I still call you that?”

“I would prefer you to call me that, if we’re going to be living together.” Will watches his hands unlock the door, leaning against the side of the house to keep himself from falling over. Hannibal must notice, because he offers a hand to Will when the door opens to help guide him inside.

“You can take any of the guest bedrooms, or the couch, if that’s what you prefer. But I would suggest that you sleep soon to get this out of your system,” Hannibal calls over his shoulder as he strips off his coat. Will walks unsteadily several feet behind him.

“Any?” Will mumbles, gazing around the house. His eyes can’t stay on one thing for too long before they’re being drawn to something else. Paintings cover the walls; he wonders if Hannibal made any of them. “As in, more than one?”

“Yes, more than one. I can show you around if you’d like, but as I said, I think sleep should be your first priority.”

Will agrees. “That’s okay,” he says. “Tomorrow, maybe. The couch will be fine.” He says that because it’s the only thing in his immediate line of vision and he doesn’t want to have to walk any further than absolutely necessary. It’s comfortable, he discovers as he drops his full weight down onto it.

“We’ll talk more about our arrangement tomorrow,” Hannibal says. “For now, sleep. If you need anything, wake me.” Will hears the unsaid ‘again’ lingering at the end of the sentence. He wouldn’t wake Hannibal if it could be helped.

He sleeps better on Hannibal’s couch than he did in his own bed, before it was taken away.

Chapter End Notes

...in which will's friends are all terrible and give hannibal an opening to start tearing will apart. i wasn't sure what exactly the punishment was for drunk and disorderly conduct. i did some research and i got a lot of answers, so we're going to assume that in this context, the punishment was jail time and a $500 fine. here's to hoping i won't have to find out myself in the future

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

That first night, Will sweats so profusely in his sleep that it soaks through his clothes and onto Hannibal's couch. Even the blanket that Hannibal must have draped over him in the night is made damp by morning. He feels terribly guilty, but Hannibal hardly seems to mind; he doesn't even make an attempt to wash it, which surprises Will, considering that the couch likely cost more money than he's seen in his lifetime. He moves to one of the guest bedrooms a few days later anyway, the one closest to Hannibal's room, and he insists to himself that it's not because he enjoys sleeping near another person for the first time in years and that the sound of Hannibal's snoring helps him sleep.

The sweating is the first of many of Will's idiosyncrasies that becomes glaringly obvious when living with Hannibal. Will discovers quickly that he and his new roommate have very, *very* different living standards.

Hannibal is definitely talented in the kitchen. Will can admit that much, and he's not inclined to complain about it, considering it means he gets to eat whatever Hannibal makes for each meal and the food is like nothing he's ever had before. It's Will's lack of table manners that causes problems.

The first night they eat together, Hannibal tries to teach him how to properly use the silverware, where to place it, and a mess of other things that Will doesn't remember two seconds after he says it. It's equal parts humiliating and irritating, and to Will's dismay, he actually continues the lessons until he is no longer eating like a child with no concept of silverware.

Will also grows increasingly bored in the large house during the day when Hannibal is at work. The doctor tells him that he's free to help himself to anything, but he and Hannibal's interests are monumentally different. He wanders into Hannibal's study one day and tries to read one of the books he finds laying around. He gets to page three before he gives up and puts it back. The same goes for the collection of movies Hannibal has; there's not a single one that conforms to Will's taste. A fraction of his time is spent trying to find an affordable apartment, though it's admittedly a smaller fraction than it probably should be.

As such, Will finds himself wandering around the large hallways a lot during the day. He teeters on the line between healthy curiosity and full-out snooping, though there's really not much to snoop. Everything in Hannibal's house is mostly open for all to see, and as far as Will can tell, there's no scandals going on inside the house. The only thing that piques his curiosity is the door to what he assumes is a basement, which is heavily locked. Hannibal doesn't explicitly tell him to avoid the door, but he figures it's implied by the large and unsightly padlock. Will guesses that it's probably where he keeps the house's alcohol, so it would go without saying that he wouldn't be allowed down there.

The boredom comes at a price—Will has never been keen on keeping a stable lifestyle, and living with Hannibal is the most stability he's had in years. It feels wrong somehow. While Hannibal is at work, Will gets Jimmy and Brian to sneak him whiskey, which he hides under the bed in his guest room. He feels guilty, but not guilty enough to change his mind.

By some stroke of luck, Will has no nightmares for the first week he stays at Hannibal's house. It is, by all definitions of the word, a blessing. His nightmares are not pretty; he knows from experience that they often end in screaming or sleepwalking, or if he's particularly unlucky, both. His worst fear is that, should he wake Hannibal up during one of his episodes in the night, it would be the final straw that got him kicked back into the street. He doesn't think Hannibal would, but the paranoia is enough to keep him up at night.

His luck runs out as they enter week two of living together. Will doesn't wake up from the nightmare, but Hannibal does. He feels hands on his shoulder and his first instinct is to lash out. He does; he feels his fist connect hard with what feels like someone's jaw. He moves the other arm to make a second blow, but it's caught by someone's hand before he can land another hit. He opens his eyes, finally, to meet Hannibal's. Will can see, in the dim light, that he has one hand covering a split lip, a slight redness staining his fingertips.

Realization hits him hard. "Oh, my God," he almost wails, sitting up fully; Hannibal releases his arm and steps backwards. "I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm usually not—I usually don't—"

"It is my fault, Will," Hannibal says calmly, holding a hand up to stop his panicked speech. He pulls the hand away from his lip, and Will grimaces at the bloody red gash it had been covering. "I should not have woken you, but you sounded pained in your sleep."

"I have nightmares," Will wheezes out. It's something they probably should have discussed the first night he arrived at the house, all things considered. "I'm sorry I didn't tell you earlier. I was hoping they'd go away, if I didn't live alone, but…"

Will watches Hannibal wipe away the blood trickling down to his chin. "Are you okay? I didn't hurt you too bad, did I?"

"No," is all Hannibal says. He uses a tissue from the nightstand to dab at the cut and eyes Will evenly. "You were drinking."

Will's heart almost stops, and he curses himself for making the decision to try to sneak alcohol under Hannibal's nose. Of course he'd find out. He could smell it, just like he had that first meeting.

He attempts a lie. "No."

"I can smell it." Will watches his nostrils flare, both unsettled and impressed. "Cheap bourbon, not a brand name."

"Should I show myself out?" Will feels himself about to fall to pieces if the answer is yes. It's been only two weeks, but he can feel a dependency forming. An attachment. He doesn't know why; his friendships—if that's even what this could be called—have always been short-lived. Maybe it's because Hannibal is stable. Maybe it's because he's the only person

that's not an addict like he is that doesn't look down on him with pity or revulsion. Whatever it is, he has a feeling he's just ruined it.

"No. I want you to talk about it, Will." Arguably, it's a worse punishment than being kicked out. "Are you a violent drunk? Is that what caused you to lash out?"

It's blunt enough to make Will flinch. It's a dangerous conversation, one that is a little too close to the darker corners of his past for his liking.

"Yes." Will is tired. He doesn't want to have a therapy session right now, in the middle of the night when his buzz still hasn't worn off, but he knows he owes it to Hannibal to answer him.

"You have hurt people."

"Yes."

"I want you to tell me about it."

"Why?" His breathing quickens, and he notices that Hannibal is sitting on the bed now. The blood on his lip has dried, and Will shoves down the impulse to lean over and lick it off. "I can't, Hannibal."

"You can." The tone is not that of a suggestion.

Hannibal is watching, waiting for a response. He's backed into a corner. No response is as much of an admission of guilt as giving one.

"My parents," he says. His voice pitches slightly. "They were violent. Both addicts. My mom liked the alcohol. Dad was more drawn to coke."

He waits for Hannibal to reprimand him for shifting the blame. He doesn't.

"My older brother got out as quick as he could. Ten years older than me; I don't know where he is now. Somewhere better, I hope." Will can't help but smile, thinking about his brother. There's a pinch of resentment somewhere inside him from being abandoned, but he understands why it was done. "They hit him too, as far as I can remember, but when he left, I had to take his beatings for him."

He thinks for a moment. "I've got scars," he says suddenly, and before he thinks twice, he lifts up his shirt to show Hannibal the scattered markings on his chest and stomach. "I got hit with all sorts of stuff. Whips. Bottles. Hands, if they weren't feeling resourceful. Or they'd put out their cigarettes on me."

Hannibal's eyes search over the scars. He still doesn't speak; Will takes it as his cue to keep going.

"So, yes. I grew up thinking violence was normal. Do you know how many kids I beat the shit out of in high school, Hannibal? Until blood was gushing out of their nose and they were only half conscious?" Will shakes his head, mostly at himself. "Too many. I was almost expelled."

“And in adulthood?”

“I didn’t get better. I got worse, if anything. That’s when the addictions started.” Long-buried and repeatedly denied memories take their chance to resurface. They’re foggy and vague, but the general outline of them is solid enough to Will to repeat almost every awful thing he’s done since the day he turned eighteen. “I would hurt people. Sometimes I’d have a reason, sometimes not. A friend, an acquaintance, a total stranger. A girlfriend. A boyfriend.” There are more names than he’d like to admit resurfacing in his mind, names he’s tried so hard to forget.

“What did you do, Will?”

“Bad things,” he whispers, and it hurts. It hurts to say those words. It hurts to admit it. It hurts to know that that it will almost undoubtedly happen again. One attack in particular stands out in his mind. “I took a knife across someone’s face once. Last I saw, he’s still got the scar, right down his left cheek.”

“And what was he to you?”

Will shrugs. “No one, really. A friend I met once or twice before. I don’t remember what he did to provoke me, but I felt like I knew him better afterwards. It was…intimate. Seeing that scar on his face, knowing I’d done that, it felt like we were connected. My dad always told me that there's nothing more intimate than a blade."

He realizes how bad the words sound after he says them. “I’m sorry,” he offers. He’s not, but he thinks he should be. “This isn’t helping my standing with you, is it?”

“On the contrary. I admire your ability to be honest, Will.” Will’s eyes snap up to Hannibal’s face. For the first time, he feels brave enough to meet the other man’s eyes. Just like the rest of his face, they give nothing away about the things he’s feeling. “While I don't appreciate the circumstances that led us here, I'm glad we could have this talk."

Will snorts. "Aren't you supposed to report patients that are a danger to themselves or others?"

"I don't think of you as a danger, Will. Do you?"

"I don't know." Not sure enough to say yes, not sure enough to say no.

"Violence is what you understand. It has been ingrained into you since you were an impressionable child. Such a thing, while unfortunate, can't be helped."

"You're supposed to fix these things, not encourage them." It's a lame attempt at trying to sound normal. In some strange way, Will is touched that Hannibal doesn't view him as less of a person because of who he is. *What* he is. He doesn't know if this can be fixed, let alone if he wants it to be.

Hannibal smiles. Will can't take his eyes away from his injured lip, as inappropriate as it feels. It's a connection between them. A link, just like with the man whose face he scarred

with a rusty blade. His stomach twists with guilt when he feels disappointment upon realizing that this injury won't scar. "I don't see a need to fix something that is not broken. Goodnight, Will." Hannibal gets up to leave.

"Wait." Will could kick himself for saying it, but it's too late; Hannibal has already turned around.

"Can you stay, please? I really don't want to overstep any boundaries, but I won't sleep tonight if I'm alone." It's a half truth; he won't sleep tonight, not at all. It's not why he wants Hannibal to stay. He's never felt the things he's feeling right now. Trust in another person, a sense of similarity, a feeling of acceptance—all things that must mean something. He's taking a gamble by asking something like this of Hannibal, but he needs the closeness.

"If that's what you prefer," Hannibal says easily. The bed is more than big enough for the two of them; even after they're both on their designated sides, they could easily fit a third person between them.

Touching is a step too far for Will, and maybe for Hannibal too. Even their current closeness causes a stirring of anxiety inside of him. Somehow it's a nice feeling, though. And to his own surprise, he does sleep, and the nightmares don't come. Dreams of blood and pain might be nightmares to some, but for the first time, they aren't to him.

Chapter End Notes

makes will's backstory as tragic and pained as i possibly can because i'm terrible this was a difficult chapter to write and i don't know how to feel about it; i hope others enjoy it!

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

There’s blood on his hands.

It’s on a lot more than just his hands. Clothes, stained a startling dark red. The floor and the walls, coated in red liquid, reflecting the overhead lighting. But he’s staring at his hands, sees the way it seeps into the cracks of his hands and the webs in between his fingers. It's still warm, producing a feeling almost akin to that of a glove.

The room is white, and it would probably be a blinding sort of white if it weren't painted red. Only spots of white show through the dripping substance. He presses a hand to one of the clean spots; when he pulls it away, there’s a bloody handprint in its place. He’s stained another part of this room with his hands. It’s a signature of sorts.

He doesn’t know where the blood came from. It isn’t his, that he knows. He doesn't need to know where it came from; whatever happened in here, he knows he did it. There is no incriminating evidence to point to his guilt, besides the layer of red painting his body. He can feel it in his bones, a deep, rumbling satisfaction that can only be described as pride in one’s work. He did something bad. He doesn’t know what. He doesn’t think he cares. The red is a welcoming color; he thinks it suits the room well.

The smell. The smell is strong; each inhale through his nose rewards him with a pungent scent, metallic and sweetly at the same time, a scent that only blood can produce. It’s a distinctly human smell, not replicable by anything else. The only thing more human than its smell is its taste.

Blood on his hands. He wants it on his tongue instead, needs the taste of copper in his mouth. His jaw opens slightly at the idea. He raises a hand to his face, hesitates ever so slightly, feeling the taboo holding him back. It's not enough to stop his tongue from touching the pad of his index finger tentatively.

The taste doesn't come; the sudden awareness of being awake greets him instead. A glance at the clock tells him that it's 10:14.

Will's clothes are still wet, but it's not from blood. It's from sweat, he quickly discovers. A quick glance to the other side of the bed shows him that Hannibal is already awake, and he lets out a breath of relief. He doesn't know where they stand currently, but he imagines that Hannibal waking up in a pool of Will's sweat would knock that standing down a notch or two.

Even more humiliating, it takes him all of three seconds to become aware of his straining erection. It's from the dream, he knows; it always is. He stopped being ashamed of his body's affinity for bloodshed after it got too tedious to feel guilty about it every morning.

He feels an enormous amount of gratitude for Hannibal's early bird tendencies. He knows Hannibal's not an animal, but he has the strangest feeling that he would smell the arousal on him. Maybe it's paranoia after the whiskey incident. Maybe it's something else.

As much as he might want to, there's nothing to be done about it. Mentally, Will forbade himself from acting on such things while in Hannibal's house. The man was being kind to him, too kind; he wouldn't do something like this in Hannibal's bed, especially not with the fantasies he has running around in his mind.

He opts for a shower instead, knowing that if he makes it cold enough, it will have the same effect as getting rid of the problem himself.

Something about Hannibal's bathrooms—plural, much to Will's amazement—both astonish and unnerve him. While they're fancy and beautiful, they're cavernous and ominous at the same time. The rooms are big enough that he can hear the falling water of the shower echo throughout them. The mirrors are too big for his liking, forcing an almost full-body view of himself on his eyes each time he undresses. Will doesn't find himself unattractive, exactly, but he's not a narcissist either, not enough to enjoy the view.

If he's honest with himself, his emotions regarding something as plain as a bathroom probably stem from the fact that his bathrooms have never had more than a toilet, a sink, and a very small shower. There's still a part of him that feels guilty that someone of his origins has dared to step through Hannibal's threshold. He even feels bad about using Hannibal's shampoo, having never survived off of anything more than dollar store brands. It's an insecurity that no amount of reassurance from Hannibal can fix.

When Will finally steps into the kitchen, hair still dripping slightly, Hannibal is cooking breakfast, as the smell wafting down the hallway had suggested. Will gives him a vague nod of the head to say 'good morning' before moving to make coffee. He glances at the frying pan Hannibal has positioned over the stove. Eggs and meat of some kind. In a normal household, it might be bacon; he knows better than to hope for it. Will has learned to expect the unexpected when it comes to Hannibal's cooking.

"Good morning, Will." Hannibal has an awful tendency to try and make conversation far too early in the day for Will's liking.

"Morning," he offers in an attempt to be polite. He hopes it will get the message across. Hopes it, but doesn't expect it.

It doesn't. "How did you sleep?"

"Fine."

Hannibal is silent for a minute or so. Will knows that one-word answers irritate him. It's too early for him to care.

"Did you have any nightmares?" Hannibal asks, just casual enough for Will to suspect that he knows the answer.

Will mulls over his answer as he sips at his coffee. His stomach is rumbling from the strong scent of food hanging over the room. "Yeah. I'm used to it, though. I slept okay."

"Yes, it would seem that you did." His tone is light and Will notices a smirk on his face. He furrows his brow, half out of confusion and half out of panic. He's been known to sleepwalk or talk in his sleep, and the things he says aren't always pleasant.

"What do you mean?" He isn't sure that he wants to know.

"You don't remember." It's more of a statement than a question; it takes everything in Will's power to keep an attitude out of his voice when he responds.

"I don't. What did I do?"

"You didn't hit me again, if that's what you're thinking," Hannibal chuckles. "Will, for someone who has made their dislike of physical contact quite evident, it would seem that you're quite the opposite when you sleep."

"I—" Will searches for words but doesn't come up with any, and he can feel the blush warming up his cheeks and ears and more or less wants to sink into the ground. "What did I do?" He's feeling brave enough to ask again.

"Nothing terrible, to be clear. I apologize if I have over dramatized it." Hannibal speaks as he moves food onto two plates. "You were quite close to me for most of the night. I had to take your arms off of myself to get up and cook." He sets the plates on the table and motions for Will to sit. Will gawks at him, taken aback by his calmness.

"You could have moved me earlier, you know," he says. He means to sound irritated, but the words come out mumbled and quiet.

"It did not bother me, and I knew better than to wake you for a second time. Sit, Will."

He complies, too hungry to refuse. Hannibal's tone was a joking one, but Will bristles at the thought of being that close to Hannibal. Just how close was he talking? Close enough for him to feel Will sweat all over him? Close enough for him to feel Will get hard? He isn't inclined to ask and find out.

He resorts to shoveling food into his mouth to calm his nerves. He's stopped bothering to ask what it is that he's eating, since he never understands what Hannibal tells him anyway. Hannibal watches him, a hint of mirth in his eyes, which Will thinks comes from his obvious discomfort. He thinks he should be annoyed at that too, but it's nice to be looked at with something other than pity or disgust, so he lets it be. Hannibal lets him eat in peace.

The day is Sunday, so Hannibal has no appointments. After Will helps him clean up the kitchen, he wanders off into some part of the house alone. He wonders what Hannibal does all day for the first few hours that he's gone. He thinks he finds his answer when he hears the distant echo of music flowing down one of the long hallways into the living room, where he's watching some game show. It's not interesting enough to keep him from following the notes to their source.

He finds Hannibal playing the piano in some back room that he didn't know existed. His eyes open, apparently hearing Will step into the room, and he feels guilty for the interruption; but Hannibal doesn't bother to stop, only watching Will for a few seconds before returning his eyes to the notes in front of him.

The song lasts for a few minutes, and Will has never been all that much into music, but it's beautiful and calming enough for him to stay to hear its entirety. "You're talented," Will says a few seconds after it ends. He leans against the door, watching Hannibal smile ever so slightly at the compliment. "Thank you," Hannibal says, genuinely. Will can only cock his head and smile awkwardly in acknowledgement before he moves to leave and return to his less than thrilling activities prior.

"I've been thinking, Will," Hannibal calls before Will exits. He looks over his shoulder at him curiously.

"What have you been thinking?"

"I would hate for you to tire of my cooking if you're going to be staying with me for a little while longer." Hannibal stands and walks in front of the piano, back leaning slightly against it.

Will isn't sure where he's going with the statement. "I don't think I will," he says, hoping his smile conveys the gratitude he feels for the man.

"I should hope not," Hannibal says, returning a smile. "Even so, I thought we might try something different tonight, seeing as I am free."

"...Okay?" Will's response sounds like a question, and it partially is. He still doesn't understand.

"Would you care to accompany to dinner, Will?"

Will blanches at the suggestion; it's equal parts flattering and terrifying. He can't exactly refuse, considering this man has been offering him shelter and food for two weeks now, even after he punched him in the face. He's surprised to find that he doesn't *want* to say no.

A smirk tugs at Will's lips; he can't resist taking advantage of the situation to tease Hannibal the way he knew he wanted to at breakfast. "Are you asking me on a date, doctor?"

There is an expression on Hannibal's face that Will can't read, but there's a hint of a smile there, so he thinks he hit the right nerve, if any. "A date, dinner between friends; it is whatever you want it to be."

Will almost asks *what do* you *want it to be?* but thinks better of it, deciding to leave a little to the imagination. "Luckily for you, I'm free tonight," Will says, the grin not leaving his face. He's both surprised and delighted at how easy it is to joke with this man—neither of them are the funniest people in the world, but they seem to understand each other's humor. "Where are we going?"

Hannibal looks pleased. "That is a surprise, I'm afraid."

A surprise sounds like a date to Will, but he keeps his mouth shut. "Fair enough," he agrees, just hoping that it won't be too expensive so he won't need to feel too guilty. He has a feeling it will be anyway.

Hannibal sits back down at the bench to resume his playing, and Will takes it as his cue to leave.

He wonders if they're crossing any sort of line that's supposed to separate the doctor and patient relationship from a casual one. Maybe it doesn't much matter; if such boundaries exist, they probably crossed them when he asked to be bailed out of jail.

He finds himself apathetic to the idea of crossing any boundaries in the first place. It's nice to have a relationship like this, one where each party can truly say they enjoy each other's company. He isn't sure if he's ever achieved that with his other friends, or they with him. It's nice to feel wanted.

It's unconventional therapy for sure, but then again, regular therapy has never seemed to work for him. This feels just fine.

Chapter End Notes

for one chapter and one chapter only, you get will & hannibal being at least somewhat civil with each other and not getting on each others nerves ! the next chapter will probably have the sex & bloodshed that ive been planning on for A While

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

When Hannibal suggests that he dress up for the outing, Will knows he's in for a long evening.

It isn't that he minds dressing up, really. It's the fact that an occasion where he needs to dress up arises so rarely in his life that he doesn't *have* anything to dress up in; mutual disgust and sadness coil in his stomach when he realizes the last time was his father's funeral. He almost wants to use this as an excuse to talk his way out of it, but he doesn't get a chance—Hannibal provides him with a suit within five minutes of mentioning his lack of one.

"From my younger days," Hannibal tells him. "You are not my size currently, but you might have been at one time."

Naturally, it fits perfectly. Will wonders if Hannibal has ever been wrong about anything in his life before.

The suit looks nice on him, as does Hannibal's, and he can't stop himself from thinking that they would make quite the pair, should it turn out like that; it would seem that an addict and a therapist can compliment each other well when dressed the right way. He knows better than to hope for this—or anything, given his unfortunate history of racking up bad karma points—but the thought crosses his mind more than once as they prepare to leave. Judging by their outfits, the restaurant is bound to be fancy, and Hannibal doesn't confirm or deny this idea. Will takes it as confirmation anyway.

The car ride is long and they're mostly silent. It isn't an awkward silence, but it isn't entirely comfortable either. Hannibal has been the one to carry out most of their longer conversations throughout the course of their friendship. Will simply doesn't know how to replicate that, and Hannibal doesn't try, so neither does he. The radio plays some classical song that Will's never heard before and Hannibal raises an eyebrow at him when he tries to discreetly change the station, so he forces himself to listen to it.

They pull into a parking lot after an hour or so of driving; it's in the nicer part of a city Will has never been to before, and just by looking at the exterior of the building, he feels out of place. This might be Hannibal's style, but it isn't his. They walk to the door together and Hannibal says the name of the restaurant, which Will thinks is French—a language he took and failed in high school and now can't speak at all—but doesn't know for sure. Either way, he can't understand the words.

Hannibal seems to be acquainted with the hostess, and they're seated rather quickly, considering a rather large crowd gathered in the lobby. He can see the irritation in the eyes of the people that had been waiting there before them as he awkwardly follows behind Hannibal.

"Is this the kind of thing you use your charm for? Cutting in front of people?" Will asks dryly upon being seated. They're directly below a rather beautiful chandelier, and the dining room is unlike any Will has been in before. It feels nice to be in such a high class setting, save for the large amount of people.

"My charm? Hardly." Will doesn't miss the smile that briefly flickers across the man's face before he moves to study the menu. Will mirrors his movements and resists the urge to slam it shut when he sees the prices listed next to the dishes. A waiter comes before Will can stress him out too badly with the menu, and he's thankful for the distraction. He looks at Hannibal expectantly when the man inquires about drinks, not knowing a thing about what they serve in places like this; he thinks it would be in poor taste to order a Coke.

Will is thankful for Hannibal's apparent skill at reading facial expressions, or at least his. "A bottle of Brane-Cantenac, please," Hannibal says with ease. Will eyes him curiously at the order of wine. He meets Will's eyes, but doesn't make a move to change the order, and lets the waiter return to the back room.

"I don't know much about fine wines," Will says, quirking an eyebrow, "but that doesn't sound non-alcoholic to me." It's the farthest thing from a complaint, but he wants to make sure Hannibal fully knows what he could be getting into.

"It isn't. Will that be a problem?"

Will wonders if this is a challenge to test his self-restraint or if it's Hannibal trying to get him drunk in a less-than-discreet manner. The latter definitely sounds more fun to him, but he knows, and is willing to bet that Hannibal does too, that it's not the smartest of choices.

"I don't know, Hannibal. Shouldn't it be a problem for you?" Will tests the waters, seeing how much of an answer he can get out of the man, who is decidedly elusive when it comes to questioning his actions.

Hannibal hums a noise of consideration. "Yes, probably. But we aren't here as doctor and patient tonight, are we?" His eyes meet Will's; the rest of his face is covered by the rather large menu.

Will swallows. He tries and fails to come up with a witty response to the comment. "Aren't we?" They're not, and they both know they're not, unless they're interested in seriously violating some ethical guidelines.

The waiter returns with the wine before Hannibal can respond, though Will suspects by the cheeky look on his face that he wasn't planning on responding anyway. Hannibal, graceful and elegant as ever, makes what Will perceives to be a show of slowly bringing the glass to his lips before testing the flavor. Will, on the other hand, easily raises the glass to his mouth and almost has to resist pouring it down his throat like a shot. He's never been drawn to wine, but he thinks that maybe ought to change—the flavor is worlds better than that of whiskey or beer.

Will downs the first glass easily, and halves another within minutes of pouring it. Hannibal chuckles at his eagerness, but makes no move to stop him, which makes Will think that

getting him drunk is at least one of his underlying intentions. He shivers when he considers what the other intentions might be.

"Eager, are you?" Hannibal asks, almost teasingly. "You hadn't struck me as a wine person, Will."

"I'm not," he laughs. He can't remember the last time he's had wine, let alone a wine that probably costs more than his rent did. "Tastes better than whiskey, though."

Hannibal nods vaguely in agreement. "Whiskey has never been a favorite of mine," he comments, which Will had already assumed just by Hannibal's general demeanor. He almost laughs at the thought of Hannibal downing shots the way he has in the past.

They're silent for a while. Will is too busy scanning the menu over repeatedly to notice the lull in conversation. Hannibal has already closed his, seemingly already decided and now enjoying Will trying to find a happy medium between not too cheap that it's obvious he's poor and not too expensive that the guilt will keep him up tonight.

"If I may," Hannibal interrupts, "I could do the ordering for the two of us."

"Has our relationship come so far already, doctor?" Will says, half-joking but grateful that he at least won't need to worry about the price.

"You seemed like you needed help." Hannibal has that look on his face, one that Will can't describe as a smile nor as a smirk. It's something in-between, and he hasn't worked out what exactly it means yet. "Do you have any strong objections to anything in particular?"

Evidently, whether Will wants him to order for the both of them or not, he'll be getting whatever Hannibal chooses for him. "Nothing too expensive, okay?"

"I can oblige," Hannibal says, but the look on his face makes Will not sure that he will. He wonders if Hannibal is one of those people with enough money that he doesn't know what to do with it, or if it's purely generosity on his part. Generosity with money is not something Will has much experience with; all his life, he's had just enough for himself and none left over for charity work. Hannibal's ease with it makes him think that he might have been born into wealth. It's not a topic he finds entirely appropriate to ask about.

The waiter returns and Hannibal gives him the order—something that sounds fancy and foreign and not what he would imagine to be inexpensive—and, against his better judgement, Will pours himself another glass of wine. There's definitely a little bit of a buzz showing itself already; a little bit more and maybe he'll be able to be the one that carries the conversation.

"Why are you letting me have wine?" Will decides to ask. He's sure Hannibal must have his reasons, though none that his mind can process without making them sound bad.

"What's fine dining without wine?" It's an answer, albeit an elusive one, as per usual.

"Trying to get me drunk, are you?" He keeps a grin on his face as he says it, though he wants to hear the answer.

"Maybe I am." The answer surprises Will enough that he can't help when the smile falters. "Maybe I want to see the side of you that I've never had the pleasure of meeting."

Will stares at him, dumbfounded, as he sips at his own glass. "You already have." It's a lame attempt at a cheeky response, referencing something far from humorous, and the uncertainty in his voice is enough to distinguish any bit of wittiness that it might have held.

"Briefly."

"Well, long enough to see—" He stops; he doesn't want to finish the sentence. Instead, he finishes the last bit of wine pooling at the bottom of the glass. He's lost count of how many he's had, and that should probably concern him more than it should, but he's already reaching for the bottle and decides that it doesn't matter at this point. He wants to see how far Hannibal will let him go.

Hannibal raises an eyebrow as he pours another. "Are you sure you're not trying to get yourself drunk?"

"I am." It's the blunt honesty in him that only shows once he's had more than a few. "Thought you'd be trying harder to stop me."

"Would you like me to?"

Will considers his answer for a few seconds, fully knowing that there's only one he can pick and genuinely mean. "No."

Hannibal either doesn't have a response or doesn't care to respond. The waiter returns with two plates of food minutes later. Hannibal ordered a fish of some kind, something Will can only identify by the smell of it; it's dressed up too elegantly for him to know much more. Will's is, from what he can tell, meat within a sauce served with rice and assorted foods that he can't identify.

It smells good, looks good. He's interested as to what it is. "This looks good and all, but what is it?"

"That is blanquette de veau. The meat is veal. I recalled how much you enjoyed my veal recipe, so I assumed this would have the same result."

Hannibal hasn't finished the explanation before Will is lifting the fork to his mouth, and he's glad that Hannibal had done the picking, because the taste is phenomenal.

"How is it?"

"It's—it's great," Will says, having to remind himself to not speak with his mouth open. He's finally putting Hannibal's etiquette lessons to good use, he muses. "Tastes a little different than yours."

There's a faint smile on Hannibal's lips. "My recipe calls for different ingredients," he says, and doesn't elaborate further. Will is too entranced by the meal to care.

If he eats too fast or too messily or without the proper silverware, Hannibal doesn't comment on it. They don't talk much throughout the rest of the meal until the check is paid, and by then, Will manages to put another glass of wine in himself. If he wasn't feeling it before, he is when they have to walk back out to the car.

"That was good," Will says once they're both in the car. Hannibal doesn't move to start it yet. "Thank you," he adds, barely remembering to do so.

"You're very welcome." Hannibal gives him a smile just warm enough to convince him to push the limit.

"Did we ever decide if this was a date or a casual dinner?" He watches Hannibal's face for a change, but it gives nothing away.

"I don't believe we did," he says, mirroring Will's over-casual tone. He decides that it's up to him to push it over the edge.

"To me, doctor," he says, doing his best to not slur his words, "a restaurant like this says 'date.'"

"Does it?"

Not exactly the response he was hoping for, but he takes it when he sees the darkening smirk on Hannibal's face. He inches a little closer, close enough for him to lean in. "It does."

He doesn't know who kisses who first, and he doesn't really care, because the intensity of it doesn't give him much room to think. The wine has thrown any appreciation he might have had for taking it slow out the window; he chances using his tongue, which is accepted. He chances a bite at Hannibal's lip, and is rewarded with one on his own. He's finally stopped when he moves to seat himself on top of Hannibal's lap.

"Perhaps here," Hannibal breathes, "is not the best place for this." He gestures vaguely to the crowded parking lot they're in. There aren't any people outside, but the amount of cars around them is enough for Will to agree.

"Where to, then?" he asks, equally out of breath. There's a drop of blood on Hannibal's lip from where he bit down, and it reminds him of the split lip he'd given him before. He enjoys the sight of it.

"Home." Hannibal moves to start the car.

"Home's an hour away," Will growls, and his lips are on Hannibal's neck before he can be stopped. It feels funny, saying 'home' like that, as if it's a shared space instead of Hannibal's space that Will is invading. "Can't we go to a hotel? There's bound to be a lot in a place like this, right?"

"I would prefer to do this in my bed at home, but I don't enjoy the idea of an hour long car ride much more than you," he agrees, and Will doesn't miss the small sigh he gives when he bites down. "A hotel it is, then. Can you survive that long?"

Will chances a look at Hannibal's face and finds him smirking down at him. "Can you?" he retorts, and his hands are at Hannibal's crotch. "Better drive fast."

There's a twitch in Hannibal's jaw as he pulls out of the parking lot. He's no longer looking at Will, but he doesn't need to be for the desire to be evident. "I am going to make such a beautiful mess of you."

Will hopes he can keep a promise.

Chapter End Notes

i Lied - no actual sex OR bloodshed in this chapter. :(the restaurant scene was longer than i expected, but i'm pleased with it?? and the next chapter should start off interesting. >:}
also: i have never ordered at a fancy restaurant before. i have no idea how fine wines or fancy foods work...i hope most of the research i did made it sound ok lmao

Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will is less than thrilled when Hannibal insists that they have to take precious time to stop at a store for 'supplies.' He knows he's right, but it doesn't do much to save the mood from being killed brutally several times over. So while Hannibal ducks into some shitty 24/7 convenience store on the side of the road, Will tries to calm his wildly beating heart.

It's been a while since he's done this with a man; it's been a while since he's done it at all, in truth. When one gains a reputation as being violent and angry, people don't exactly line up to get intimate with them. Thus, Will's love life has gradually become as barren as a desert.

Hannibal is, to say the least, not Will's type. Will's type is people like him, people who liked to get high off of anything and everything and fuck like gods while it lasted. He has not the slightest idea of what Hannibal might like. Perhaps this will be a learning experience as much as a refreshing one, he muses.

Hannibal returns to the car a few minutes later and tosses a bag into the backseat. He twists the key and within seconds, they're driving back down the road at an impressive speed.

"Eager, are you?" Will teases, echoing what Hannibal had said to him at the restaurant.

His lips twitch into a smile. "You could say that."

That's why Will wants him, he thinks—because Hannibal wants *him* specifically, and that's more than almost any one of his other partners could say. Hannibal has a way of making him appreciated. It's a feeling so foreign to him that maybe he likes it a little too much.

He blinks away the blurriness in his eyes, shakes his head to make sure he doesn't pass out just yet. "Where are we going?"

"Somewhere nice." Hannibal doesn't look at him, but he can hear the smugness in his response. "I wouldn't dream of taking you anywhere less."

Will's breath hitches in his throat and he thinks he's letting Hannibal have way too much fun with this, but his brain is too clouded to form a witty response. He must know that Will has a weakness for kind words like that—he's using it to his advantage, and he'll let him do it as much as he likes.

The car ride is short and what Will could describe as comfortably awkward. Awkward in the sense that they weren't speaking, even though there was lots they could be talking about, but comfortable in knowing that words would matter very little within the next hour. Words could kill the passion that Will feels radiating inside the small space. There's fear in him that speaking might mean saying too much, too little, or too much wrong and not enough right; Hannibal's silence suggests that he might be thinking similarly.

Arriving at the hotel eliminates any further need or desire either of them had to speak. Hannibal moves them along quickly—to the desk, pays in cash, takes the key and ushers Will upstairs. The presence of an old man in the elevator with them is the only thing stopping Will from jumping Hannibal there.

But maybe he underestimates Hannibal just a little bit, because the moment they're in the room and the door is locked, it's Hannibal that has him pinned against the wall. His eyes are dark, not at all like the gentle ones of the man he speaks to in a therapeutic setting. This is something raw and primal. There's a slight twinge of fear that sneaks down his spine; he's never been the one not in control before. A part of him likes it, and a part of him is ever so slightly wary of that look in his eyes.

"I felt you this morning," Hannibal says, and Will is absolutely loving the way his voice sounds like this, thick with desire and that accent of his even heavier. He's confused by the words at first, and he wants to look at Hannibal but the man turns his neck to the side so he can bite at it. "Hard against me. I have to wonder what caused such a thing."

The memory of his dream returns to him and he feels his cheeks turn red in embarrassment. "My dream," he says, though it comes out raspy, considering the teeth at his Adam's apple. An attempt to explain further dies in his throat when the teeth bite down, hard enough to draw the threat of blood forth.

"Tell me about your dream, Will." He moves his mouth away from Will's neck to look at him in the eyes, and when he attempts to turn away, Hannibal gently grabs his chin and redirects it to face forward. "Look at me. I want you to look at me as you tell me."

He doesn't want to talk about it; his body disagrees. He resists the urge to shut his eyes. "I have them a lot. There's blood everywhere, every time. On me. On the walls, on the floor." He watches Hannibal lick his lips at the mention of blood, wondering if it was subconscious or meant to be as teasing as it seems. "I think I—I think I killed—I think I did something bad, and I liked it." He doesn't know what he's trying to say, and he's stuttering and slurring but it must be the right thing to say because Hannibal gives him a little smile of approval.

"When you told me of your appreciation for violence, Will, I had not imagined it to be in a sexual nature." Lips graze over his, not fully connecting, before returning to his neck. He feels another hard bite just above his collarbone, and this time, he can't keep the noise he makes out of his throat. There's nothing on his mind but drunken lust and desire; he makes no attempt to argue. "Or am I incorrect in my assumption?"

Will knows he knows that he's not wrong; he wants to hear him say it. "You're not wrong," he gasps, and Hannibal grins with just a hint of teeth showing. They're red in places, red with what Will realizes is his blood.

"Is violence what you desire, Will?" Hannibal's eyes return to his, and he doesn't look away this time. He gazes back through half-lidded, lust-blown eyes and rosy cheeks. "You need only ask."

A breathy "please" is all he can offer, and it seems to do the trick. Hannibal's hands gracefully remove Will's suit jacket first, then move to unbutton the undershirt. His hands graze over

Will's bare chest and stomach, and he feels the threat of fingernails scraping lightly over the skin.

"You get this handsy with all your patients, doc?" Will somehow manages, pleased with the amount of sarcasm he's able to keep in the comment.

"Only when I find it to be beneficial in their therapy," Hannibal answers, a bit too seriously for the situation. Will almost laughs, but then they're kissing again and he isn't inclined to pull away. Somewhere between the tongue in his mouth and the hand occasionally threading in his hair, he misses Hannibal undoing his belt and pulling his pants to the floor. He only notices when he feels the rush of cold air on his skin and shivers involuntarily, despite the heat overflowing inside of him.

It occurs to him that while all he's wearing is an open undershirt and boxers that don't do much to preserve his modesty, Hannibal is still fully clothed. Looking rumpled and ravaged, with his tousled hair and marked neck, but still dressed finely in his suit. Will decides that needs to change.

"As nice as you look in that suit, I need you to take it off." Will doesn't wait for a response before he gently shoves the jacket off of Hannibal's broad shoulders, then moves to strip the rest of it off. His hands are shaking and he's a little dizzy, though, so Hannibal kindly pushes his hands away and finishes the job himself. Will is rewarded with a shirtless view of the older man for the first time, and while he's busy staring, Hannibal's pants come down too.

"Where do you want—" Hannibal starts, and in a spur of the moment decision, Will shushes him with his mouth. As much as he's been looking forward to a bed, it suddenly seems about five steps too far away.

"Right here." He drops to his knees, tries to remember the last time he did this, and can't conjure up the memory. He decides that his prior knowledge wouldn't matter anyway—Hannibal is unlike anyone he's been with before.

Will traces his finger over the outline of Hannibal's erection. "Can I—?"

"You may," Hannibal says, as if the growl he makes when he looks down at Will isn't confirmation enough.

Will doesn't need to be told twice, and suddenly there's a lot less talking and a lot more doing. As slowly as he can manage without torturing himself, he lowers Hannibal's final piece of clothing to his ankles. He wraps a hand around the shaft and looks up. Hannibal's face is stoic, though Will doesn't miss the twitch his jaw makes when they make eye contact. He takes it upon himself to watch that expression change, to *make* that expression change. He holds the eye contact for as long as he can as his mouth sinks down over the length.

The noise Hannibal makes is absolutely delectable, Will thinks. His own cock twitches in agreement at the thought, and it gives him incentive to do even better. He runs his tongue back down the length, tastes it in the back of his throat—distantly familiar in the sense of the standard salty, musky taste, but unique in a way he doesn't care to analyze.

A word he can't identify rolls out of Hannibal's throat; he can't be sure, and maybe it's the way it's said, harsh and rough, but it sounds like a curse word in one of the many languages he can't speak. Hannibal's fingers curl in Will's hair tightly, and it's all the confirmation he needs to know that he's doing a pretty good job.

Will tries to maneuver himself out of the undershirt dangling on his shoulders, but a rough yank on his hair makes him think better of it.

"Leave it on," Hannibal says, his voice a throaty growl. "I enjoy seeing you in my clothes."

As turned on as he might be, Will can't resist a response and pulls his mouth off of Hannibal's cock, a string of spit still connecting it to his lip. "Narcissist," he says, and he means it, in an endearing sort of way. He makes an attempt to sink back down on Hannibal's length, and again he tugs on his hair, this time with the intention of pulling him to his feet. It's pleasure as much as it is pain; he obeys Hannibal's wordless command and rises. Hannibal is panting, breathless, and Will feels the swell of pride in his chest that he's managed to unravel a man always so composed.

"How'd I do?" He's fishing for a compliment, and Hannibal will know it, but he also knows Hannibal will humor him.

"Wonderful." The hand returns to his hair, gentle this time, combing through the locks. He lets Hannibal kiss him, and this one is softer than the rest, not as fueled by lust as their previous ones. Will can't remember someone has kissed him this genuinely, and it seems far too short when Hannibal pulls back. "But we aren't finished here, are we?" And then his hands are dipping into Will's boxers, lowering them down, and he leans into Hannibal's shoulder; a moan forces its way out of his throat and he can't help but realize that they're too close to the wall, close enough to make noises like that noticeable to the other nearby occupants. He finds that he doesn't care.

Hannibal's hands leave Will's body in favor of digging through the plastic shopping bag, sloppily discarded near the door. He turns around, lube and condoms in each hand, but Will hardly notices them—he's busy looking at Hannibal's body, from his chest to his cock. He's chiseled like a Roman god, and Will wants to worship him like one.

Hannibal returns to Will, panting and wanting against the wall. Before he can do anything, in a spur of the moment decision, Will takes it upon himself to smack the condom out of Hannibal's hand. He hardly looks surprised, his face still almost humorously calm, but he presses Will hard against the wall for the action anyway.

"That was very rude, Will," he growls into Will's ear. He feels teeth on his neck again, yelps in surprise when he feels the wet warmth of blood in their wake. "Maybe I'll need to give you a lesson on politeness."

"Maybe you will." There's a rumble in Hannibal's chest, likely in response to the cheeky smirk he gives, but he apparently decides that applying the lubricant to himself and thus moving on to more enjoyable activities is more important than a comeback.

He makes the process tediously slow, ignoring Will's whines to speed up. The moment he seems to be satisfied, Will wraps his legs around Hannibal's hips and his arms around his neck. Hannibal's fingers dig into Will's thighs, leaving red spots that will later turn black and blue.

"I trust you've done this with a man before?"

Will resists the urge to groan at the question. *"Yes,"* he hisses through clenched teeth. *"Fuck,* Hannibal, do it already."

He's rewarded with a hard thrust into him, and he's surprised at how loud the resulting moan seems. He drags his nails down Hannibal's back, then moves his hands down to his own cock in an attempt to touch himself. His wrist is grabbed roughly by Hannibal before he can make it.

"Wait until I say." His voice is pure arousal, feral and raw, and as much as he wants to, Will is too turned on to argue against it. He relents and returns his arms to Hannibal's neck.

"Harder."

He half expects Hannibal to slow down, just to make him even more desperate, but he isn't displeased when he gets the result he wants. Hannibal easily speeds up his thrusts, and they become rough enough for Will to feel his back digging into the wall, raw and painful in the best kind of way. He is being loud, Hannibal's name and incoherent cries flooding out of his mouth, but Hannibal is mostly silent, save for the occasional growl or moan.

Hannibal's hand reaches up to grip Will's throat tightly. Will's eyes dart to him in surprise; the hand is tight enough around his neck for him to be unable to speak, but loose enough for him to still be able to pull in breaths.

Hannibal's eyes are dark as he looks at Will, almost daring him to attempt to look away or close his eyes. The fingers curl just a slight bit tighter. "You look beautiful like this, Will."

Will is sure Hannibal can feel the moan that vibrates around his throat. His eyes gleam wickedly and his hips speed up their movement, indicating to Will that he's getting close. He wants to cum with Hannibal, and Hannibal must have the same idea, because he releases Will's throat from his iron grip.

"Touch yourself, Will."

Will's hand darts down to his cock, throbbing and neglected, and begins a frenzied stroke. Normally, he would take his time, try to pace himself to be in time with his lover; but right now, between the alcohol in his veins and the sheer intensity of the encounter, he doesn't have the patience for a slow buildup. He's cumming hard within less than a minute, and somewhere lost in the hazes of orgasm, his head falls into Hannibal's neck and he sinks his teeth into the skin there. Maybe he's rougher than intended, or maybe he's not, but the taste of blood flooding into his mouth has him recoiling to observe the damage he's done. There is a very nasty looking bite mark where his mouth was, blood slowly trickling down to Hannibal's chest, and he might feel sorry if it wasn't so damn hot.

A deep-throated roar erupts from Hannibal's throat, and whether it's out of pleasure or out of pain Will can't tell, nor does he really care—after all, those lines seemed to have been blurred from the very start. He's inclined to believe it's the former, though, when Hannibal cums a split second after with such force that Will is left weak in his bones.

Hannibal leans his forehead against Will's, and while they're not in the most comfortable of positions for after-sex cuddling, they stay together like that for a minute or so, panting and enjoying the closeness. When Hannibal finally slips out of Will to clean off and his feet touch the ground, he nearly falls over.

"At least we can say you bought me dinner first," Will jokes, and he can see Hannibal's shoulders move up and down in silent laughter.

"That we can. And we can say I provided dessert, too."

Will finds it uncharacteristic for a man such as Hannibal to be so flirty and free with him. Part of him wants to believe that means something. The other part keeps him from getting his hopes up.

"I'm gonna get a shower," Will says, and it's mostly because a shower will help wake him up enough to maybe start a round two. He wants to keep this going while he can—he's unsure of how things will turn out once they return home and resume living as before.

"Would you prefer to go home to shower?"

He doesn't. He wants to stay right where they are, in a place where their only options are to sleep in formal clothing or to sleep naked. "No, it's late. We can stay here tonight."

Hannibal gives him a vague nod in response. He looks comfortable on the bed anyway; Will doesn't feel bad about leaving him in favor of showering.

He showers for a little too long with the water a little too hot but it does wonders to take the heavy fogginess out of his brain, leaving him with only the remnants of drunkenness. When he steps out of the shower, he spends several minutes staring at his reflection, at the various marks newly inflicted on his skin. His neck is battered the most—he counts three rather large love bites accompanied by a vaguely noticeable outline of a hand print. Unsurprisingly, his hips are beginning to bruise, the purple coloration of them looking a little like the wine he'd downed earlier.

It's a lot to take in. Hannibal certainly hadn't been gentle with him, and he has a sudden desire to return the favor.

He is disappointed to find that he can't, at least not tonight; Hannibal is sound asleep. Will has to laugh at the sight—he evens sleeps perfectly, lying totally still, his hands clasped on his stomach. If not for his snoring, Will might have thought he was resting. He checks the clock, surprised Hannibal is asleep this early, and finds that it really isn't very early at all. The clock reads 12:22.

He glances at his phone next to confirm that, yes, the time is indeed half past midnight. There are also two texts that greet him when the phone lights up—one from Alana, asking how his therapy is going, and one from Brian, which is considerably less innocent.

His finger lingers over Alana's message, the one that he shouldn't even hesitate to answer. Instead, he swipes over to reply to Brian's message.

The message is worded kindly, at least by Brian's standards. ***i know ur going through some shit right now, but me and jimmy got havent seen u in a while and we wanted to know if u wanted to chill***

Will knows what 'chill' means—they've scrounged up enough money to start using again. He glances over at Hannibal's sleeping form, trying to bring forth even a shred of guilt for considering it.

He types a response, wondering if he'll even get an answer. The message was sent an hour ago; he doubts they're still conscious enough to type. *i'm not home right now.* It's short and to the point, hopefully enough for them to get the hint. Will's phone buzzes less than a minute later and he closes his eyes in annoyance.

where you at? we'll pick you up

He wants to laugh at that. *nice one. not when you're high. stay off the road.*

Another buzz within two minutes of hitting send. ***we haven't started yet.***

Damn it all. Before he can formulate a reason why he shouldn't, Brian texts him again. ***so where are you?***

He chances another look over at Hannibal, who is still sleeping soundly, blissfully unaware of how close Will is straying to what feels like betrayal. He hates himself as he gives Brian the name of the hotel.

He waits a little longer for a response this time, and he doesn't know whether to feel relieved or upset at the possibility that they decided they didn't want to drive out to him. Five minutes later, another message is delivered.

your bf is treating you right, i see. you high class shit

Will feels like he should deny that, but with Hannibal sleeping in his underwear only a few feet away from him, it seems pointless to try. He's not a boyfriend, but he's...something.

we'll be there

Will has to consider what exactly he's gotten himself into. Hannibal could wake up at any time, and then he couldn't very well leave—not that he'd want to, if that were the case. The dress shirt he slips on smells of sweat and doesn't do much to hide the bruising on his neck. Funnily enough, the problem with what it is he's about to do doesn't cross his mind.

Will sits on the bed and waits for his next mistake.

Chapter End Notes

you know, in my years of writing fanfiction, i don't think i've ever written a full blown sex scene. first time for everything. this fic has officially graduated from mature to explicit

at any rate, i hope i did okay ! this chapter's a little longer than usual so i hope i didn't mess up anywhere and didn't see. also, i wanted to suggest here that if you have ideas for the future of this fic - send 'em to me! i'm interested in hearing different ways this fic could go. i have a ton of ideas and am not sure which path to take exactly. you can do that here - criminalimprov.tumblr.com. hope everyone enjoys !

Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

By the time Jimmy and Brian arrive at the hotel, Will is surprised they made it at all for several reasons. They're in Brian's car, which, for all intents and purposes, probably should have become scrap metal a decade prior. It smells of gasoline on the inside and the outside is rusted and dented. It's a wonder they made it over a mile in the thing; maybe it works for them on a regular basis, considering they don't venture far out of their comort zone, but anything more than that is pretty much asking for an accident.

To add insult to injury, the two of them are passing a bottle of Grey Goose between them in the front. Will almost has second thoughts about stepping into the car. Almost. Then they hand him the bottle and suddenly he's not hesitant anymore, he wants this. The vodka tastes bitter and sharp on his tongue, not at all like the sweetness of the wine he'd been tasting earlier, and he wonders when he let his standards get so high, when he forgot the person he's been hiding away when he's around Hannibal. Mild annoyance pools in his gut, more at himself than at Hannibal. He likes Hannibal too much for that. He pours another mouthful down his throat.

"Should you two be driving?" Will asks, his tone biting and sarcastic in the way he can only be around them. He's only half joking, but they howl with laughter anyway. They laugh like hyenas; he can't tell if he's missed the sound or if he's grown to resent it.

"No, but neither should you." And they're right, he discovers when he glances down at the bottle clasped tightly in his hand and finds that well over half of it is gone. He snorts in response and brings it back to his lips.

"You guys better have some good shit, if you're dragging me out to your place in the middle of the night."

"Oh, please. Like we haven't before." They're right about that too. This used to be a regular occurrence, before the overdose happened. How much of himself has he forgotten? "Anyway, you won't be disappointed. It's the good shit, you know. We'll have a good time, just like before."

Will doesn't miss the hesitant way Jimmy trails off at the end of the sentence, the way he avoids what the meaning of 'before' is. Before the overdose. He should be dead right now, Will thinks. There are people who die that deserve it far less than him. Before the guilt can rise to his mouth and leave its foul taste on his tongue, he downs more of the toxic liquid swirling in the bottle.

There's a heavy silence hanging in the car for a few seconds, or maybe it's just him. Brian turns on the radio, cranks it up loud to drown out the silence. Will hardly hears it; he doesn't speak or move for the remainder of the drive, save to pass the bottle of vodka back to Jimmy at the front when asked.

He's fully drunk again by the time they arrive, and the two of them have to help him up the flight of stairs leading to their shitty apartment. Will has never known how they've managed to live together for as long as they have—the apartment is very clearly not built for more than one. It's a shabby little place, somewhere in the outskirts of Baltimore, in an area where the sun tends to not shine. It's not pretty, but he figures that it fits when you're spending most of your time there to do drugs.

Will sits on the couch, watches the floor spin beneath his feet. His heart is pounding and he knows he shouldn't do this, shouldn't fall back down the well and expect Hannibal to come rescue him again. But then Brian brings out the bag of white powder, bright as snow and so, so tempting; and he can't *not* do it. That's what he came here for, isn't it? He knew what he would find—why would he go if he didn't want it?

So he tugs a credit card out of one of his pockets, one that's probably long since expired or maxed out, and joins Jimmy and Brian in sorting the substance into fine lines. He takes a dollar bill out with it, rolls it up, and feels the cocaine dust his nose and throat.

The guilt lasts for only seconds; cocaine's effects are not immediate, but tonight it feels like they are, and he feels warm satisfaction and euphoria bubbling inside him. He leans back against the tattered couch he's on, lets the minutes pass by as he bides his time until the effects peak.

"Shit, dude, your neck," Brian says suddenly. "What, did you get mauled?"

Maybe under normal circumstances, Will would feel more secretive about the subject and less inclined to share every gory detail. Tonight is an absolute plethora of abnormal circumstances. "Dr. Lecter likes to bite," he says coolly. It feels funny using Hannibal's official title like that, after so long of being on a first name basis, but he's opening himself up for more prodding if he uses the man's first name. First names are intimate.

"Really? How was he?" Brian is apparently no longer interested, having turned his attention back to the lines of powder on the coffee table, but Jimmy is all ears.

"He was..." Will pauses, searches for the right word. 'Good' is not doing him enough justice; 'the best he's ever had' is just corny enough for him to be unable to force it out. "Something," he finishes. It leaves things up for interpretation.

"Something? Something good or something bad?"

"Something way beyond good." His heart has sped up, pounding wildly in his chest. Part of him wishes Hannibal were here, so he could share the euphoria building in his veins. He chances another line, remembers how it almost killed him last time. *Fourth time's the charm.*

"Speaking of your doctor," Brian begins, then takes an awkwardly long pause before finishing. "Did you ever find out what that door was? The weird one in his kitchen?"

Will has to think for several seconds to pull up the memory of the door. He hasn't thought about the door in a long while. Each time they'd brought over his whiskey, their curiosity in

the door's other side would be rekindled, as would his; now it seems trivial to be talking about.

"Told you. It's probably a wine cellar." Will shrugs his shoulders, making his disinterest as obvious as possible. They either don't notice or don't care, and between the two of them, either seems equally possible.

"The lock still on it?"

"Yeah." Will pauses at the tone in Brian's voice, and looks up to see the two of them looking at each other with a look that he knows for a fact has never ended in something good. "Why?" he asks hesitantly.

"Well, he's not home right now, is he?" The two of him stare at him expectantly, awaiting an answer. He feels like he should lie, but he wants to know where this will go. It's a guilty pleasure of his, that—needing to take things as far as possible before they got too ugly.

"No."

"We could go over there. Break the lock off, see what he's got down there." The look in Brian's eyes as he says it destroys any hope Will might have had that it was a joke. It's very much not.

"Could be money," Jimmy cuts in. "Even if it's not, well—worst case scenario, we walk out of there with some top notch wine."

"He has an alarm," Will hisses.

"And you have a key."

If there were ever a time that Will doubted that these two were anything other than assholes, addicts and petty thieves, he can't remember it. He hates them in this moment, but not only them; himself too. They've done this before, but never to someone they know. The risk is greater this way, especially with someone like Hannibal, who will surely notice if something is amiss and put the pieces together.

Will isn't interested in robbing his friend. Maybe Hannibal has changed him, or maybe he's just never been quite as into these things as Jimmy and Brian. It doesn't matter. He *is* interested in whatever is past that door, however, apparently so secret that Hannibal can't even explain it to him.

"He'll know," Will says quietly, desperately hoping it will change their minds; he doesn't expect it to.

"He won't know *who,* and that's all that really matters, isn't it?"

"Maybe to you." Perhaps at one time, Will wouldn't mind losing a friend if it meant personal gain. This time is different. Or, maybe—maybe Hannibal is different. He doesn't want to lose the man. Apparently Hannibal can't save him from the vicious cycle of relapse, but he can make it less painful. This he knows from experience.

"Jesus, Will, when did you get so attached?" Brian is glaring at him, taking a more aggressive stance than Jimmy, as per usual. "How far inside your head has he crawled?"

Anger flickers over Will's face before giving way to resignation. If he doesn't go with them, they'll likely go on their own another time, and he would rather not have them stumbling around in a foreign place alone, possibly alerting Hannibal in the process. He ignores the side of him that is just as curious as the other two are. "Know what? Fine. We'll go. In and out, and don't take anything."

Their faces crumble at the last part, but he makes it clear that it's non-negotiable; as bitter as they might be, they agree to his terms. He finishes the last of the cocaine dusting the table and stumbles out to the car with them, checking his phone in the process. There are no new messages; he assumes this means Hannibal is still sound asleep at the hotel.

The drive to Hannibal's house is short, under a half hour. Will double checks the driveway and the garage upon arriving, and is satisfied to find that Hannibal's car is nowhere in sight. He feels guilty as he inserts the key Hannibal had so generously provided to him into the door, but it's not enough. It's never enough.

They continue through the entrance, and Will recalls the first time he stepped through, drunk and nervous and awkward. It seems long ago, longer than it's been.

Long enough for him to deserve the right to see the other side of that door.

"Shit!" one of them hisses within seconds of entering, followed by a thud. He can't blame them, maneuvering in unfamiliar territory without lighting, but annoyance bubbles inside of him anyway. He resists the urge to kick them out right then and fumbles for the light switch to avoid further damage. A book has been knocked off one of the side tables. He skims over the cover—*Crime and Punishment,* one Hannibal has mentioned to Will as a favorite before. He grimaces and lays it gently back on its rightful place.

The house, big as it is, is rather intimidating at night; it's made worse by the sense of intrusion Will feels. Not even moonlight seeps through the windows, leaving them in a thick, heavy darkness as they approach the kitchen.

"Don't turn the light on," Will whispers.

"Why?" Someone bangs into something again and curses, and Will is tempted to throw caution out the window in favor of lighting. "Because it's the middle of the night and having a bunch of lights on looks suspicious." A little bit of light pours into the kitchen from the living room, but most of the room is encased in shadows. Luckily, the door and its lock are bathed in just the right amount of light for them to be able to see.

Brian pulls a hammer out of his jacket pocket and steadies it as much as he can with his shaking, sweaty hands. Will watches, swallows hard and waits for the harsh sound of metal on metal. Suddenly he has a feeling that he doesn't want to see whatever is on the other side.

Instead of the bang that would indicate the lock being struck, Will hears something else—a clear pattern of light footsteps.

"Hold on." The two look over their shoulders at him. "Do you hear that?"

"Hear what?" It takes a few seconds, but the noise returns, and their faces pale in fearful realization. "I thought you said he wasn't home."

"He shouldn't be." *He could be.* Hannibal is a constant surprise, and Will hasn't yet worked out of it's frightening or interesting. He isn't sure which would be worse—having Hannibal find them like this, or being found by a potentially dangerous intruder.

Will can see them hold their breath, and he realizes that he is, too. He can't tell where the footsteps are coming from or if they're getting any closer. They drift in and out of his hearing, and eventually he lets his guard down when they seem to vanish altogether. All things considered, they could have easily been hallucinations, he thinks. It wouldn't be the first time he's had them. Brian and Jimmy had too, but they're hardly trustworthy when sober, let alone high.

"Break it now so we can leave," he says, keeping his voice as low as possible. They return their attention to the lock, only to turn back at him, identical looks of horror on their faces.

"Will!"

There's no time for him to react before he feels a searing pain in his shoulder, followed by wet warmth running down his back. He doesn't have a chance to cry out either; a hand snakes around his throat and yanks him roughly backwards. He stumbles and falls flat on his back, subtle worrying over staining the carpet with blood in the back of his mind.

"Pardon me, William." The voice is above him, and although he can't see in the dim lighting, the accent is unmistakable. Hannibal. His mind can't process the words, nor the throbbing wound on his shoulder. He can only watch in half-lidded, silent fear as Hannibal advances towards the two still in the kitchen.

Hannibal's form is lost to the shadows, but the darkness can't drown the noises out. There's some vicious crashing and thumping within the kitchen, and Will can't identify the noises, but they sound unpleasant. Even worse is the sound of wet, garbled choking, followed by a heavy thud onto the ground.

Will can still hear Jimmy's voice, soaked in fear and trembling. He can't make out the words, but they are those of a truly terrified man. His voice, too, is silenced, as if it's been switched off. He doesn't know how, and he finds that he doesn't care to find out. There is further shuffling coming from the kitchen, and Will tries desperately to drown it out.

There is silence for a while, and Will finds himself starting to fade, despite himself. He makes no attempt to keep himself awake and lets his eyes slip shut, only to feel his shoulders grabbed by hands and begin pulling him upright. His instincts tell him to struggle, but the knowledge that it must be Hannibal keeps him from doing so.

"Oh, Will." It's soft and murmured, subduing him enough to allow himself to be led into the kitchen by Hannibal and dropped into a chair. The lights are switched on, but Will shuts his eyes tightly when the smell hits his nose. It's one he's smelled more than he'd like to admit,

pungent and metallic. He doesn't want to see where it's coming from, though he has a feeling that he knows.

He allows his shirt to be tugged over his head, but doesn't move when Hannibal asks him to raise his arms. He wrestles it off of his body anyway.

"Will, look at me."

He shakes his head slightly, afraid to be too defiant. Fingers graze over his jaw, lightly directing his head in a different direction.

"Look at me."

It's slightly less gentle than before. Reluctantly, he opens his eyes and meets Hannibal's. He shuts them again when they inevitably gaze behind the man and see that the floor has been painted a sickening red.

"What did you do?" he whispers, and part of him is hoping Hannibal won't answer that.

"I did what had to be done." Will feels his stomach churn and thinks he might vomit right onto Hannibal's shoes. "But I could ask you the same thing."

"*I* didn't do anything. It was—" He opens his eyes slightly again to make sure he hadn't hallucinated the blood on the ground. They flicker back to Hannibal's face, and fear chills his body. His face is blank, but his eyes are smoldering and dangerous. Will is suddenly hyper aware of the pain in his shoulder. "We didn't do anything. We were going to..."

"You were going to stick your noses where they don't belong."

He sighs, relents under the intimidating stare the man is giving him. "Yes. That's hardly the issue here. Did you—" He chokes on his words, unable to force the last part out. He stares at Hannibal helplessly, begging him to fill in the blanks.

"Say the word, Will. Did I what?"

"You know."

Hannibal is silent.

"Did you kill them, Hannibal? Jesus Christ." He buries his head in his hands. He doesn't want to see Hannibal's face as he answers.

"One of them I believed to be a threat. I may have gotten carried away."

Will swallows down what he already knew. "Which one?"

"I do not know. Perhaps you'd like to tell me."

Hannibal wouldn't know. Of course he wouldn't. If Will wants to know which of his friends is dead, he'll need to look at the body himself. Shakily, without thinking, he moves off of the

chair and looks around the kitchen. He doesn't see anything except the gore covering the walls, and looks at Hannibal in confusion.

"Steady. You lost a lot of blood." Will laughs bitterly at that. *Yeah, thanks to you.* "I moved his body into the corner to minimize the mess, though it didn't work as well as I hoped."

Will ignores the idle conversation Hannibal is trying to forge from the fact that he's committed murder. He feels blood seep between his toes as he makes his way towards the direction Hannibal pointed him in. He doesn't want to see. He needs to see.

It's Brian's body that is slumped against Hannibal's pristine kitchen walls. He's so covered in blood that at first Will can't spot the injury; when his eyes wander up to Brian's face, he sees the wide slash across his throat, and the river of blood that had run down his front, soaking into his clothes and onto the ground.

He does vomit this time, barely making it to the garbage can in time. Hannibal runs a hand down his back, in what he believes is supposed to be comforting. His nerves scream at him to move away from the touch. He doesn't.

"Brian Zeller is his name." Will is still staring into the trash can as he says it. "Was."

"I am sorry, Will." His tone is not that of a regretful man.

"Jimmy is alive?" He finally drags himself to his feet and shuffles back to his chair by Hannibal. He tries to lean back and violently lurches forward again when his open wound touches the chair.

"For now."

Will drags his eyes from the ground to Hannibal's face. He wants to sound intimidating, but his shaking voice makes it impossible. "Excuse me?"

"We can't very well let him go. I'm sure you know that as well as I do."

He does; he will go to jail as quickly as Hannibal will. He's beginning to wish Hannibal had killed him like he had Brian.

"He will be unconscious for a while. In the meantime, I can tend to your wound."

"Don't—don't touch me." Will scoots as far from Hannibal as he can, which isn't far. He's shaking from the drugs and weak from the blood loss. There's not much he can do to refuse.

"I do not wish to hurt you. I want to help." Hannibal moves behind him. Will feels fingers on his back and flinches at the touch.

"You already did. I said don't fucking touch me."

There's a hand on his throat again, tight enough to be a threat. "I am not taking kindly to your tone. Let me help you, Will."

It's a command this time, one that Will isn't strong enough to refuse. The world is spinning, growing darker quickly. He feels himself about to drop off, and can only hope Hannibal will allow him to stay that way.

Chapter End Notes

this was a fun chapter to write. i am terrible
sorry for ending it kind of suddenly - really wanted to get an update up, and i have a good plan on the beginning of the next chapter. i hope this will suffice !

Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

He is out for less than five minutes, or so Hannibal tells him. He's still as dizzy and disoriented as before when he opens his eyes, but he is able to focus on what looks like a first aid kit in front of him. He can feel Hannibal's body behind him and goes rigid again.

"You need stitches," Hannibal informs him, which he could have inferred from the numbness spreading over his shoulder. He says it so casually, as if he isn't the one that had inflicted the wound, like he's just the doctor that has to fix it. "I believe I went a bit deeper than intended."

Will doesn't know how to respond to that, so he answers with a question instead. "Why didn't you just kill me?"

"You underestimate my affection for you." Hannibal speaks as he begins to thread the stitches through Will's skin, sewing back together what he had broken. It's gentle—it seems impossible that these hands are the same that ripped him open. Will wants to see his expression, but Hannibal is directly behind him, making it impossible. "I can't say that I'm happy with you, but I would never have you meet an end like this."

Will opts to ignore the sentiment behind the words. "You mean, the one that my friend met?" His voice is hoarse, and he can't sound as angry as he would like. He sounds positively deadpan when he says it; he hopes it's not a reflection of his emotions in the inside.

"I would not cause you any unnecessary pain, Will." He ignores Will's angry rhetorical question. His hands are still moving, and Will wonders just how ugly this wound will look when it's all over.

"How kind," he says bitterly.

"Relax your shoulders for me." Without thinking, Will listens to him immediately, and cringes when Hannibal hums his appreciation.

He should be running, not sitting here and letting a murderer stitch a wound that he caused. This man has killed one man and has done God knows what with another; how is Will special? What is saving him from the same fate?

He wants to believe that he doesn't know, but he does. It's the mutual feelings they share; he can't identify said feelings, but they aren't what they should be. They're not hatred or fear or anger. They're nowhere close. It's something akin to an attachment, an appreciation for Hannibal's company—it's a big deal for someone who has opted to live their life mostly in solitude. Will knows by Hannibal's words that he is in a similar situation.

Will has never taken pride in his taste in partners, but this is by far the worst.

"Have you heard of the Chesapeake Ripper, Will?" Hannibal asks, shaking him out his shameful replay of their activities earlier in the evening. The name is familiar to Will's ears, but he has to think for a few seconds. He remembers hearing the name on the news, and in this situation, he has a feeling that's not a good thing.

The memory clicks and he feels himself start to shake again. The Chesapeake Ripper, the killer that has racked up a considerable body count, always with organs missing. He thinks he would vomit again, but there's nothing left in his stomach. "Yes," he murmurs warily. Hannibal finishes with the last of the stitches, snipping the string and closing up the first aid kit in the table. Will is now forced to meet Hannibal's eyes when he returns to a chair next to him. His eyes are gleaming, crinkled a little at the edges the way they get when Hannibal is trying and failing to suppress a smile. Will's brain tells him to move away, and in direct defiance, he leans in.

"Have you ever wondered what he might be doing in his spare time?" Hannibal asks, tilting his head. "Often, the media fails to address that he is a man, just like the rest of us. He can blend into the crowds, take the shape of someone no one would believe capable of murder. He must act as a chameleon to avoid capture."

Will has a feeling that he will be getting to know a very intimate part of Hannibal soon, one that he never signed up to meet.

"Thus far, he has shown us that he is quite capable of blending in. Tell me, Will. The Ripper is far more than a murderer; what do you believe him to be?"

They are close enough to kiss if they wanted, but the tension between them is enough to build a wall to keep such things out. Will takes a shaking breath; he could answer correctly and call the Ripper sick and twisted, encased in a darkness that no one person should be able to thrive off of.

But can he say those words—and mean them—knowing very well that he doesn't believe it himself? He can't. He won't.

"I think," he utters, "I know exactly what the Ripper is."

"Tell me."

Will's eyes wander down to Hannibal's hands, his palms stained red. It might be his blood; it might not be. He remembers a time when he looked at his own hands and found a similar sight.

"Why don't you show me?"

It's a risk, certainly. The fog in his brain hasn't made him blind, not entirely, but he doesn't need to be made blind to make a poor decision. Their faces are too close together for it to be appropriate anyway; all he does is close the last bit of distance between the part that matters.

Hannibal is agonizingly slow and gentle with the kiss, despite Will's attempts to get him to speed things up. He's kind and easy just as he had been with the stitches, and Will has to

wonder if it's a fear of scaring him away if he were to get too violent all of a sudden. He is ashamed to find that violence wouldn't frighten him away at this point, and would probably only entice him further. He tries to make this known, but Hannibal keeps up the facade of the monster with its claws sheathed.

He ignores the thoughts, keeps going. It's uncomfortable, the way they're leaning on separate chairs to touch each other, so Will takes the liberty of sliding himself onto Hannibal's lap. That seems to get him to let go of the act—one hand tangles in his hair and the other comes to rest on his chest. Will can still feel the slight stickiness of drying blood on the hand and it doesn't bother him as much as he thinks it should.

It catches his attention when Hannibal starts to slide the hand lower. It's fine at first, and he shivers at the tender warmth of it. It comes to rest at the waistband of his pants, causing Will to flinch when he feels his fingers start to dip below.

"No," he says breathlessly, pulling away suddenly. "No, no. I can't—you can't touch me like that, not like...this." He feels sick at the thought of it, and even sicker when he's forced to admit that he wants it, judging by twitch his cock gives in protest. Part of him hopes Hannibal will continue anyway, but he knows he won't. Hannibal isn't that brand of evil.

Hannibal regards him with what looks like confusion, but he dutifully removes his hands from Will's skin. "Very well. I will not touch you without explicit permission."

It might sound mocking coming from anyone else, but Will knows Hannibal is being genuine. He winces slightly at the finality of the statement.

"I didn't mean that," he says quietly. "I mean sexually. I can't just jump into bed with you after this. I don't think that's unreasonable."

What *is* unreasonable is the implication that he ever would jump into bed with Hannibal again after this. He wonders just how high he still is right now.

"I understand." Hannibal lightly nudges Will off of his lap to stand and stroll to the other end of the kitchen. Will is shaking again; it could be due to any number of things. "At this point, it seems appropriate to mention that I will give you a chance to leave, should you choose that route. I will not pursue you, nor will I hurt you, as long as I believe you are keeping my secret as you should be. This is a generosity I do not extend to most people, so I hope you'll take it seriously."

Generosity. Hannibal is quite generous on all fronts. It seems like an odd word to tack on to a man who is calmly polishing blood off of an obscenely large knife, but it's oddly fitting.

Will considers the offer he's being given—a once in a lifetime get-out-of-jail free card to escape from a serial killer. And yet, he hesitates.

"Do you..." he begins shakily, trailing off for several seconds before he can finish. "Do you want me to stay?"

It's a stupid question. Of course he does. Not once since Will moved in has Hannibal suggested that he leave. Will isn't blind, and neither is Hannibal. A connection here is undeniable. He wants Hannibal to say it. He wants to be swayed.

Hannibal is silent for several seconds, and Will can see him swallow hard. "I would ask you to stay, if it were not simultaneously asking you to become complicit in your friend's murder."

He wishes he hadn't asked, because then he wouldn't need to acknowledge the indifference he feels at that.

He stores that away to feel guilty about later. There's a decision to be made, one that could quite literally mean life or death. He should run, he knows that.

But when one runs, usually they have a place to run to. Will does not have that luxury. Leaving Hannibal means a life on the street, a life without the two friends that allowed him to numb it all, a life with the phantom feeling of Hannibal's hands on his body, bloody or otherwise. Somehow, that seems more undesirable than the alternative.

This is a dangerous dependency he has forming. It's the only thing that he is positively certain of.

"When I told you that I wanted you to show me what you are, I meant it." Hannibal gazes over at him at that. "So show me, Hannibal. Show me what you are. And then I'll—" He considers his next words carefully. "I'll decide if I can live with myself if I choose you."

Hannibal chuckles, and it's completely out of place, given the situation. "You underestimate the things that I've done, Will, and the things that I will continue to do."

"No." He shakes his head. "I'm not. I don't expect to be...pleasantly surprised. But if I'm going to stay with you, I need to know you."

Hannibal eyes him with an expression he doesn't care to read into. He won't tell Will know. That much he's sure of. He hasn't yet worked out if that's a good thing.

Because Hannibal might be right. Will might not be ready to face whatever kinds of demons Hannibal has hidden in plain sight. He isn't sure which scenario would be worse—fearing Hannibal enough to run, or finding that he *doesn't* fear this man.

"If you truly want to see," Hannibal says finally, perfectly measured, "then show you I will. Although now would otherwise be a fine time, I do have a mess to clean up." He gestures to the gore-spattered walls around them, making Will suddenly became aware of the sight and smell again.

Out of all the emotions Will should be feeling, curiosity is not one that he finds particularly appropriate. Nonetheless, he asks a question he knows Hannibal will have the answer to. "How are you going to clean up? Bloodstains show up under a black light, even when cleaned." He half-smiles sheepishly at Hannibal's bemused expression. "I learned that in college. I was majoring in criminology, before I dropped out."

"How fitting for you," he muses. Will can't tell if he's serious or not. "You needn't worry about how I clean up. I'll take care of it, preferably before any stains or smells permanently deface my kitchen."

The way he says it makes Will think he's done this multiple times, and while that shouldn't be surprising, it alerts the primal part of him that is still screaming to run. "Dispose of many bodies, doctor?" is what he says instead.

As if reading his thoughts, Hannibal cocks his head and smiles grimly. "Never ask things you don't want the answer to, Will."

He nods, though the answer tells him everything he needs to know. "Right."

A heavy silence hangs between them for several seconds. Hannibal is the one to break it. "This will likely take me the rest of the night, if not longer. In the meantime, I'd like you to sleep off your high. I wouldn't want a clouded mind to impair your decision making."

Will doesn't bother to ask how he knew he was high. He accepts the offer gratefully, because he is not interested in watching Hannibal dispose of Brian's body.

A thought occurs to him. "Hannibal," he says softly, purely to get his attention, which it does. "Do what you need to do, but please don't hurt his body. Okay?"

Hannibal nods his head once. "I won't."

"Thank you," Will says, and cringes at how ridiculous it sounds. There is one other thing he needs to know if he wants to get even a quarter of an hour of sleep tonight. "Where's Jimmy?"

"As I said, your friend is safe for the time being. He is in the basement."

"Alive?"

"Alive," Hannibal clarifies again. "Unconscious and bound, but alive. We will decide what to do with him together. Tomorrow," he adds at the end. "Go to bed, Will."

Neither of them bothers to say goodnight. It seems pointless, knowing that neither one of them will be sleeping, albeit for very different reasons. Will stumbles upstairs in the dark, listening to Hannibal begin work on the kitchen the moment he is out of sight.

He strips off the dress shirt and pants he's somehow managed to keep on all night and opts to sleep only in his underwear. He hesitates before climbing into bed, fearing that his soul will stain the sheets, before deciding that it already has countless times before.

~

Will's sleep is a fitful and dreamless one. He wakes several times throughout the night, feeling increasingly worse each time he does, and forcing himself to ignore the noises Hannibal is making downstairs proves extraordinarily difficult.

The moment he wakes up and finds light shining through the curtains, he decides he's had enough with attempting to sleep and that, ready or not, Hannibal will just have to deal with his presence downstairs. His mind doesn't even allow him to enjoy the usual few minutes of morning hangover-induced ignorance and instead replays the previous night's events for him in alarming detail.

He buries his face in the pillow and half-laughs, half-sobs. *Terrible,* he thinks. *You were terrible before, but this is a new low.*

It's pointless to stay in bed longer than he has to, seeing as not even his mind will let him have peace. Slowly, he slides out of bed and grimaces when his bones scream and creak in protest as he stands. He searches for an acceptable pair of pants for all of two minutes before deciding that he doesn't care if Hannibal sees him in his underwear, considering he's seen him in less. He is shivering, though, and while he can't tell for sure if it's from the cold, he pulls on a red flannel he has laying around anyway.

In what he knows is a childish attempt to stall for time, he decides to look at himself in the mirror and try to at least look decent. It's not that *he* cares; it's the worry that Hannibal will care. His curly hair is matted and wild, though it could be passed off as artfully messy if he wants. The stubble on his face is looking particularly thick, however, and his brain mockingly remarks that it compliments the dark circles under his eyes well. In a split-second decision, he picks up shaving cream and a razor.

He takes barely a few centimeters of hair off before he knicks himself with the razor and yanks it away from his face. His eyes are met with the sight of blood beading on his cheek, and when he reaches up to touch it, feels it smear onto his finger, his stomach drops.

He's grateful that the toilet is only a few steps away, because within seconds he's vomiting up what seems to be everything but his childhood memories, even though his stomach should have been wiped clean the night prior. He's never been squeamish over blood before. Maybe he's just seen far too much of it within the past 24 hours.

Footsteps begin to echo from the hallway and Will lays his face against the cool porcelain, hoping to diffuse the rising heat in his body. Like clockwork, he hears a knock on the other side of the door within seconds.

"Will?" Hannibal's voice is that of pure concern, and Will might laugh at that if he didn't think it would cause further nausea.

He considers telling Hannibal to fuck off, but the masochistic side of him is too excited at the prospect of seeing him to go through with it. "Come in," he says hoarsely.

The door opens so quickly that Will has to wonder if giving permission really mattered. He lifts his face to watch Hannibal make his way over to him; shaving cream drips off his face unattractively. He doesn't bother to stop his eyes from roaming over Hannibal's body, upon finding him dressed in a sweatshirt and jeans, something he's never had the pleasure of seeing before. Even on lazy days at home, Hannibal would be wearing a dress shirt at the very least. It was unsettling as much as it was arousing.

"Hangover sickness," Will explains vaguely, not bothering to elaborate.

Wordlessly, Hannibal gathers up a washcloth and hands it to Will, gesturing to his face in the process. He wipes himself off and quickly hands it back before he can see the red staining it.

They make silent eye contact for a few seconds. "You're up early," Hannibal says, breaking the silence as he usually does.

"What time is it?" He doesn't care. He won't be going back to sleep.

He takes a short glance at his watch. "8:43."

The last time Will was awake this early was probably when he was still in school. He shrugs uncaringly at the time. "Yeah, well. It wasn't exactly the best sleep of my life." He stands and makes his way to the sink to brush his teeth. Hannibal appears behind him in the mirror and makes eye contact with Will's reflection.

"I was going to wait until later, but since you are awake early, now is as good a time as any."

Will stares back at him, frowning slightly in confusion.

"Your friend would like to see you, Will."

Chapter End Notes

not much exactly 'happens' in this chapter - it's more of just discussion of will's gradual downward spiral. fun ! i hope you enjoy

Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will is silent for several seconds. "He's awake?" he asks, because he doesn't know what else to say.

"Yes. And he is quite angry with me." Will almost chokes on the toothpaste at Hannibal's tone—he actually has the nerve to sound annoyed at the fact that his prisoner is not behaving as politely as he would hope. "He is also convinced that you're dead or otherwise injured. I suggest you show him otherwise, because he refuses to listen to me."

"Hannibal, full offense intended," Will scoffs, spitting out the toothpaste, "but he has every reason to not listen to you. Let me handle him." *Handle him.* The words echo in his mind. Maybe Jimmy doesn't have a reason to listen to him, either.

Hannibal's glowers at him through the mirror indignantly. Will turns around and eyes him pointedly. "I mean it, Hannibal. He's *scared.*. He'll listen to me."

"I wonder," Hannibal murmurs, and Will doesn't ask. His eyes meet Will's, and immediately, Will turns away, not wanting to see the obvious affection brimming in them. It's not that he doesn't like it, exactly; it's more that he knows he should hate it. "May I touch you, Will?"

No. "Yes," he says, admittedly a little eagerly.

Broad arms snake around his waist and pull him close. They hold him tightly, possessively, and he's just a little bit scared until he feels Hannibal press a light kiss into his hair. Will can't help but go tense, and Hannibal must notice, because the arms are gone just as quickly as they'd come around him. He's feeling bold today, bold enough to face Hannibal, but apparently not enough to maintain eye contact, because his eyes almost immediately fall to Hannibal's chest instead.

"Dearest Will." Hannibal brushes a curl out of Will's face with the gentleness of something holy—not that either of them would know, he thinks bitterly. "Look at me, please."

"I can't." A hand moves under his chin, redirecting his face upwards to prove him otherwise. Will relents under Hannibal's touch, feeling somehow calmed rather than frightened.

"What do you see when you look at me, Will? Do you see far too much of me, or far too much of yourself? Do you see things you'd rather not think about, like the last thing your friend saw before he died?"

Will bristles and growls, tries to wrestle his head out of Hannibal's grip, but he holds tighter. Infuriatingly, Hannibal clicks his tongue at him. "Answer my question, would you?"

"Why?" Will hisses through clenched teeth. "Why should I?" *Because he'll kill you right here if you don't,* his mind reminds him. *Or, even worse, he won't.* He's feeling defiant, and he doesn't want to think about the answer.

"I asked you politely, William." Will hates hearing his full name spoken like that. He almost wants to spit in Hannibal's face for it, and maybe he would, if his body didn't like hearing it.

Will makes a final attempt to pry his head out of Hannibal's fingers and fails again; if only for the sake of being allowed to leave, he decides to answer.

"I see bad, bad things," he whispers. Out of spite, he keeps steady eye contact. "In you, and in me. I see the things you've done, and I see myself not caring. Ignoring it so I can continue to enjoy the best in you, because I have no one else." And that's the ugly, stone-cold truth of it—without Hannibal, he is alone. He wonders when that happened, when everyone that ever mattered to him even a little bit disappeared without a trace.

Hannibal's eyes soften just enough for Will to notice. "If there is such a thing as the best in me," he muses, "then you are the first to see it."

Hannibal's hand slackens just a bit, and Will takes the opportunity to tear his head away, perhaps a little too aggressively. "That wasn't a compliment, in case you were wondering."

"Nor did I take it as one."

Will huffs out a breath. The look that he finds in Hannibal's eyes upon looking back is unmistakable. He wants to hate it and can't not love it. There's something hanging between them, words needing to be said, and Will is willing to supply them. "Well, kiss me, won't you?" He knows Hannibal, the gentleman that he is—if using the term loosely—won't touch him without being told to.

Hannibal's eyes flicker darkly, most likely at being told what to do in the tone that Will used. He'd likely regard it as impolite, but apparently not enough so for him to deny the request. In seconds his lips are on Will's, as are his teeth. Hannibal's fingers thread in Will's hair and pull his head back slightly, giving himself a better angle to deepen the kiss.

Will's mind is blank, focusing only on the feeling of Hannibal's lips and vaguely thanking his stars that he'd brushed his teeth first.

Hannibal's tongue tangles with Will's and he tastes delectable, like a sharp peppermint. He doesn't have nearly enough time to appreciate the taste; Hannibal pulls away far too soon, chest rising in hard pants and his lips swollen.

"I adore you," Hannibal says quietly, almost low enough that Will isn't quite sure if he heard it correctly. Before he can ask, Hannibal speaks again. "You shouldn't keep your friend waiting too long. That would be rude."

Will can only nod in agreement, words stolen from under him.

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He doesn't know what to expect in Hannibal's basement. A torture chamber seems most appropriate, however unlikely it might be. Hannibal doesn't seem much like a horror movie murderer, though. Too barbaric for him.

In truth, what he finds looks almost normal. Almost. There are a few unusual stains on the ground and walls, something not at all like Hannibal to allow. A large refrigerator rests in the corner of the room, housing things that Will doesn't quite want to think about. But if one wasn't looking for things to be suspicious about, it might look fairly benign.

Or maybe it would, if Jimmy weren't tied tightly down to a chair in the center of the room, mouth and eyes bound by blindfolds. That doesn't seem much like Hannibal either. Will wonders if he's ever let someone live this long. Again with the generosities he's never given before Will. Flattery is the first emotion he feels at that, followed quickly by disgust.

"Jimmy?" Will asks hesitantly. Immediately he flinches hard in the chair and muffled shouting is absorbed by the cloth. "Stop. It's me. Don't scream, okay? Don't scream. I'll take this off—" He tugs at the folds over Jimmy's face, both amazed and annoyed at the tightness of the knots Hannibal had made. It's more comforting to think that the skill came from Boy Scouts and not great amounts of practice.

The binds come loose and drop to the floor. Immediately Jimmy's terrified eyes look up at Will, searching and pleading, begging for a rescue that Will won't give. They're red and puffy, and the sight hits Will hard; he's never seen Jimmy cry before. They stare at each other for a long several seconds before Jimmy grows impatient.

"Well, fucking untie me, will you? We need to go. I thought you were dead." His wrists are pulling so roughly at the binds on his that Will can see blood seeping out of the raw skin pressed against them.

"He didn't hurt me," he says, almost defensively. He doesn't know why he feels the need to lie if it means protecting Hannibal. "He was doing what he needed to do." He winces after he says it. It made more sense coming from Hannibal's mouth. Now it just sounds as if he's been brainwashed, and frankly, he's wary to rule that out completely.

"We're finding you another fucking therapist once we're out of this, Will." Before Will can be angry at that, Jimmy continues; his voice sounds softer and more pained now. "Is Brian...?"

"Yes." He's surprised at how easy the word comes to him.

Will is afraid that Jimmy will cry again, but he doesn't. Whether it's because Will is there or because he's run dry of tears, he isn't sure. In actuality, he laughs a bit, in a depressing way. "Fine. This isn't the place to mourn. Fucking untie me, Will."

Will hesitates, not wanting to refuse, but also knowing he can't comply. With Hannibal just upstairs, Jimmy will die anyway if he's untied. That's the logical side of it; the other side of Will reminds him that if he escapes, Hannibal will go to jail, and that can't happen either. "I can't."

"You *can't?* Whose side are you on?"

He can't answer that. "It's not about sides. I have to keep myself safe too, Jimmy." He can't exactly call it a lie—he doesn't know what to expect from Hannibal, though he's doubtful the man will truly cause him any real harm.

"You're fucking safer than me. He's letting you walk around. I'm the one tied up in his basement, for God's sake." Will watches Jimmy's eyes suddenly switch from angry to distrustful. "Why's he letting you walk around, Will? Better yet, why *are* you walking around his house freely?"

Will hears the accusations in his tone and his jaw clenches. "I don't know what you think we have going on, but—"

He's almost thankful when Jimmy interrupts him, because he doesn't have an argument to make. The gratitude vanishes when the words leave his mouth. "You don't need to explain yourself to me, man. I get it."

Will regards him with wary confusion.

"You've finally found someone just like you."

Something ugly inside of him snaps, and he knows he's just proven Jimmy's point when he hears the harsh slap ring out through the air. Before he knows it, his hand is on Jimmy's jaw and forcing him to look up, look into his eyes, see that whatever is reflecting in them is not Will Graham. Blood spills from a cut on Jimmy's lip and onto his fingers. He resists the urge to lick it off.

"You are forgetting," Will sneers in his face, voice laced with venom, "that it's not me tied up and at Hannibal's mercy." He doesn't recognize his own voice. "Hold your tongue."

None of this is words that he would usually speak and it all sounds so foreign, coming from him, and they both know it. Jimmy's lips curl upward into a snarl. "Is it really Hannibal I need to worry about, Will?"

Will is about to agree that no, maybe Hannibal isn't the real threat here, but he hears footsteps thudding down the stairs. He releases Jimmy's face from his hand and steps back a few feet. He doesn't know why he feels the need to hide his actions from Hannibal, knowing that the man would probably congratulate him for them. He's not ready to face their glaring similarities yet.

Hannibal steps towards them and one glance is all it takes for Will to know that he's been listening. "You sounded as though you needed help," Hannibal offers.

"We're fine," Will replies tightly. Despite Jimmy's earlier words, he looks far more fearful of Hannibal than he ever had of Will and sits silently in his chair, not offering confirmation or denial.

Hannibal trains his eyes on Jimmy. "He's bleeding," he notes casually.

"Yes," is all he's willing to say.

Hannibal's eyes return to Will's, a small smile on his face. Half of Will wants to punch it off and the other half wants to kiss it off. He opts for neither. "Have you decided what you'd like to do with him, Will?"

Jimmy is finally willing to pipe up at that. "If you let me go, I won't say anything," he pleads, voice breaking. "I won't. Swear to God."

"He's lying," Will murmurs. It's possible that he's not; Jimmy would be hesitant to go to the cops for anything, even for something like this, that he knows. But he says the words anyway and doesn't attempt to take them back.

Hannibal steps closer, and Jimmy's eyes dart nervously between the two of them, as if not knowing which to fear more. "You realize that leaves us with only one option, Will."

"Was there ever a second option?" Will asks bitterly.

"No," Hannibal agrees, "there wasn't." He lets the words hang in the air for several seconds. "But I suspect you knew that all along."

Will is silent. Disagreement is futile; agreement will hurt too much.

"Will, please," Jimmy begs. He hardly hears. Hannibal is pressing a blade into his hand, leaning in close to him.

"I'd like you to do it."

Will's fingers curl tightly around the handle. He stares at Hannibal with wide eyes. "I can't do that, Hannibal."

"You can. You will." Hannibal's scent surrounds him, powerful and intoxicating. Breath ghosts over his ear. "And whether or not you'll admit it to me, you want to do it."

Everything seems still except for Jimmy's heaving chest. He's never seen such a look of pure fear on someone's face before, the primal urge to flee evident on his face. Will is ashamed at the pleasure that brings him.

He's gripping the knife so hard that his knuckles are stark white. He loosens his grip lightly and steps forward again. He can't imagine how mad he must look to his friend, and wonders if it would be an accurate depiction of how mad he actually is.

"Take your time, Will. Don't push anything." He pauses, stares at Will for several long seconds. He is shaking again. In anticipation, fear, anger, all three, perhaps—it hardly matters. "I would hate to see your sanity fray at the edges."

As if it hasn't already, as if it hadn't long before he met Hannibal, as if they both don't know it. Hannibal isn't the source of the darkness bubbling around him like tar. He's simply helping it grow and expand.

"Don't do this, Will." Will can't help but pity him, pity that sad, scared, small voice he's never heard from this man before. "You aren't a killer."

"He's right, Will." Hannibal's hand traces softly down his back and he involuntarily pushes back into it, reveling in it, despite knowing how easily the touch could turn brutal if he makes the wrong choice here. "You aren't a killer. Not yet."

The last part is said pointedly. Hannibal ignores the hitch of breath Will makes and speaks words equally as bad. "Would it be so bad, Will? To indulge in this the way you indulge in addictive substances?"

It's a low blow, but it has its intended effect. Hannibal's fingers curl around Will's wrist and raise his hand up, so the blade glints in the low lighting. It's clean, Will notes, the metal bright and shiny. He wonders what it would look like painted in blood, if the blood would shine in the same way.

Hannibal takes his hand away, and Will realizes he's still holding the knife up high.

"Come on, Will." Jimmy's eyes are brimming with tears now, and if he's going to do this, he has to do it before the tears spill over. "Put it down."

He does; the knife rests at his side for several seconds, and no one speaks, no one moves. Will is shaking almost as hard as the man in the chair is. And then he lunges forward with agility he didn't know he possessed, and it takes all of five seconds to rip Jimmy's throat wide open and watch a red waterfall begin to cascade onto the ground. Blood dots Will's face, hands, clothes; Hannibal is stained in a similar way, though not as heavily.

If he wasn't going to Hell before, he thinks he's just secured himself a spot.

Jimmy convulses for only a few seconds before going limp, but it's a few seconds too long, and Will knows he's just given his mind a new nightmare to plague him with at night. Jimmy's not the one crying now—he is, tears spilling hot down his cheeks, mixing with the red on them. They aren't tears of sadness, and he's not sure how to feel about that. The knife clatters to the ground.

He does the only thing he can think to do—plants a hand on Hannibal's chest, no doubt leaving a large, bloody hand print on his well-tailored suit, and smashes their lips together. It's angry, rough, teeth hitting off of teeth and biting on each other's lips, but it's what he needs right now. He forgets to breathe and only remembers when Hannibal pulls away to look down at him and run a hand through his hair gently.

"I am proud of you," Hannibal says, and Will laughs, because he doesn't know what else to do, then buries his head in Hannibal's chest.

"You bring out the worst in me," he mumbles into the fabric. "And I think I like it too much."

Hannibal's chest vibrates with silent laughter. "I must say that I enjoy it, too."

"Of course you would."

He feels a kiss pressed into his curls. "Can I get you anything?" Hannibal asks, ever polite.

'No' rests on the tip of his tongue, before he decides that being honest is a virtue that they could both work on. "I could use a fix, honestly." He angles his head upwards to see Hannibal's face.

The smile that has undoubtedly been there since Will did the unthinkable doesn't falter. "If it's what you wish, though I have some terms and conditions..."

Chapter End Notes

i am so, so terrible and i'm so, so sorry. i can honestly say i didnt expect this fic to get this dark, but i guess in a fandom like this it's not exactly...unexpected. anyway i Do like this chapter and i hope you all do too :-)

End Notes

ahhhh first chapter, short & kind of boring ! i have most of the story mapped out so it won't stay this way, provided i can find the energy to finish this and not abandon it - lord give me strength. some of the tags/characters are subject to change i guess but most likely won't. i hope this idea hasnt been done and i hope people enjoy it

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!